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NOVEMBER '93

## PETER

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#### PLUSS

- · MAPEX MARS PRO DRUMS
- · MORE DOUBLE BASS GROOVES
- · TOMMY'S LUTHER RIX
- REMEMBERING ROGERS DRUMS

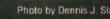
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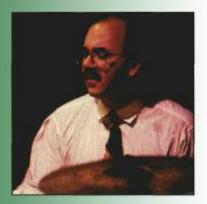


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#### PETER ERSKINE

Steely Dan's music visited every corner of the musical map. Now jazzer Peter Erskine's worldly...heck...universal influences have been summoned for the Dan's reunion tour.

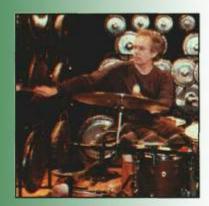
Rick Mattingly



#### VIKKI FOXX

Vikki Foxx was in a band called Enuff Z'Nuff. Vince Neil was in a band called Motley Crue. A couple of axes fell, Vikki now lays down the beat for Neil, and everybody's happy.

Matt Peiken



#### PIERRE FAVRE

Fearlessly exploring the nether regions of avant-garde music, Pierre Favre challenges common notions of what drummers can and should do. The elite of Europe's musical risk-takers have known this for years. Get hip.

Michael Bettine

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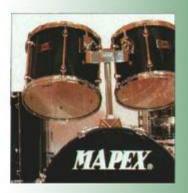
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#### Editor's Overview



#### **Drum Business**



This November, we'll be premiering a bi-monthly trade publication for the owners, managers, and sales personnel of specialty drum shops, as well as full-line music dealers who carry drums and percussion equipment. We're calling it *Drum Business*, and its editorial objective is to help drum dealers operate more effectively and efficiently. Why announce the

release of a trade magazine for drum dealers to MD readers? Well, simply because the information we plan to pass along to dealers will indirectly benefit you—the consumers of drum equipment.

Along with interviews with successful retailers, manufacturer close-ups, and insightful discussions with key industry leaders, *Drum Business* will offer a series of departments designed to enlighten dealers on ways in which they can serve you *better*. For example, we'll investigate things like the proper maintenance of inventory, shop layouts, and how full-line dealers can make their drum departments more inviting by offering easier access to drums, cymbals, and accessory items. In essence, we'll be presenting many ideas on how today's drum dealer can make the entire purchasing process a more enjoyable experience for the consumer.

Since education is such an important aspect of a dealer's operation, we'll also be supplying thoughts on how dealers can better qualify their teachers, offer programs that enable student-musicians to perform in a band environment, and organize drum clinics. Hopefully, we'll make more dealers aware of the importance of clinics and workshops, and thereby encourage greater participation. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of dealers actually offer clinics. Truthfully, we'd like to see more of it—particularly for young drummers who live in remote areas and don't get the opportunity to witness these inspiring events.

One other extremely important function of *Drum Business* will be to keep dealers fully abreast of the latest drum gear. Regular updates on drums, hardware, cymbals, electronics, percussion, and accessory items will ensure that drum dealers are kept well-aware of all new equipment from the various manufacturers as that equipment becomes available.

*Drum Business* has been established primarily to develop a better line of communication between the manufacturer and dealer. And we're certain it will do just that. However, the real benefit of any industry trade publication always seeps on down to the consumer level—where it tends to do the most good for the *entire* industry it represents.



#### Modern Drummer

Editor/Publisher

Ronald Spagnardi

Associate Publisher

Isabel Spagnardi

Managing Editor

Rick Van Horn

Features Editor

William F. Miller

Associate Editor Editorial Assistant Adam J. Budofsky

Art Director

Justin J. Cordes Scott G. Bienstock

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Administrative Manager

Lori Spagnardi Tracy A. Kearns

Advertising Director

Bob Berenson

Advertising Assistant

Joan C. Stickel

Marketing And Public Relations Susanne Losquadro

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Robyn Flans, Simon Goodwin, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Matt Peiken, Teri Saccone, Robert Santelli.

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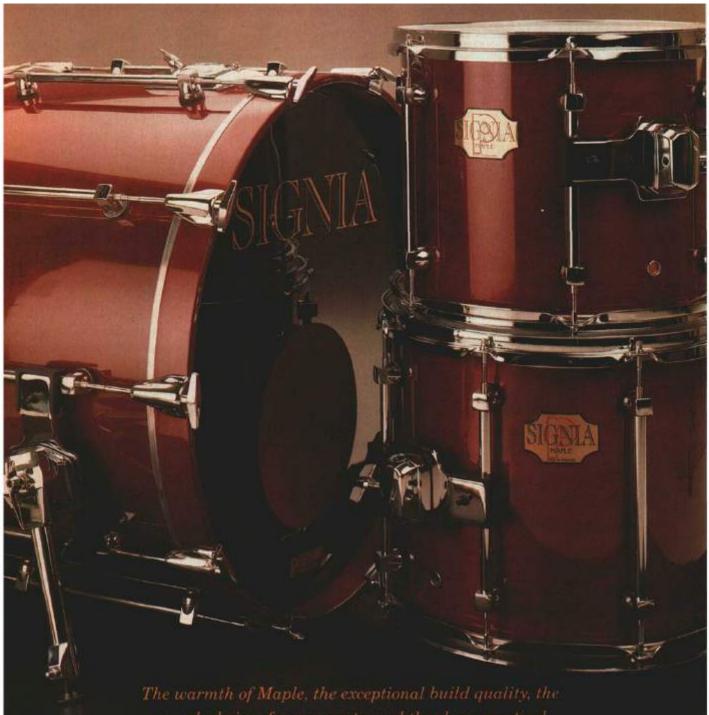
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#### Readers' Platform



#### Max Roach

I just want to thank you for the excellent article on Mr. Max Roach in your August issue. Max's Bud Powell story on "screwing up the song" had me laughing, and his story about redoing the Roach/Rich drum battle during Buddy's last days had me crying.

Timothy Cromer Orlando FL

#### MIKE PORTNOY

I'd like to wholeheartedly thank *Modern Drummer* for your excellent feature on Mike Portnoy [Aug. '93 *MD*]. I have been desperately searching for information about Mike ever since I first heard *Images And Words* about a year ago. I have, as your article suggests, been talking constantly with other drummers I know, and regardless of our musical tastes or backgrounds, we all agree that Mike possesses a talent for the drumset unlike anything seen or heard since Neil Peart came on the scene quite a few years ago.

A friend of mine was lucky enough to meet Mike at a show a few weeks ago—and he told me what a great guy Mike is. I think it's important for exceptional players like Portnoy to keep a level head and retain some sense of modesty. By doing that, they inspire other players to better themselves both as drummers and as people. It's really nice to see such a talented drummer as Mike Portnoy receive some of the credit he deserves.

Adam Brown Rancho Palos Verdes CA

Wow, what timing! Due to your favorable review of Dream Theater's *Images And Words* in the May '93 edition of *MD*, I purchased the disk—and found myself immediately impressed with Mike Portnoy and crew. Looking for any info on Mike, I was real interested in your August '93 edition. Barely having read the article, I heard that Dream Theater would be at a local club—something I couldn't (and didn't) miss. What a show! It's been too many years since there has been a band with the talent

and energy that these guys have. For a solid two hours they played some of the most original, complex, and powerful music on the market today. I'm convinced that I've now seen one of the true "upcoming giants" in the rock world. Thanks, *MD*, for letting me in on them.

Dan Messinger Toledo OH

#### FRANCO ON BONHAM

Thank you for Joe Franco's article on "Classic Bonham Licks" in your August issue. He cleared up what was always a big mystery to me and my drummer buddies: how the intro to "Rock And Roll" was played. It was also great to see some of the more obscure Zeppelin songs like "Achilles Last Stand" and "In My Time Of Dying" transcribed. Many thanks to Joe for an excellent article.

Ken Adrian Clifton NJ

#### **UPDATE: McBroom**

I just wanted to express my thanks for including an update of Jerry McBroom of the Christian band Bride in your July issue. There is an incredible wealth of talent in the Christian music scene these days, just waiting to be discovered, and I thank you for helping to give these artists some exposure.

Bill Cherry Warren MI

#### **UPDATE: VARONE**

In the *Update* column of your July '93 issue you had a write-up on Phil Varone of Saigon Kick. The article was great and well-deserved. Phil's playing on both their first release and on *The Lizard* shows a great deal of originality. The patterns he plays during verses of songs are not your everyday drumbeats, and they add an extra driving force behind Saigon Kick's music.

However, you mentioned the success of their first single from *The Lizard*, and referred to it as "Love Will Find A Way."

Sorry guys, the correct title is "Love Is On The Way." I've always read *MD* and will continue to do so in the future. But I couldn't let this mistake slip by.

Tony Zangoli Sarnia, Ontario, Canada

#### AND THE WINNER IS...

If there ever were an event in my life I will cherish nearly as much as I do the day I married my wife, it has to be the day I was called on stage to receive a "Long Distance Traveler Award" at MD's Festival Weekend '93. Here it is, almost twenty-one years since I first touched a drumkit, and at thirty-seven years old I'm virtually starting over again. I began my "comeback" in March of this year with the purchase of a new kit, and I've played that kit (or a practice pad) one to two hours a day, seven days a week, since then. My goal is that in one year I will be ready to go out in public and demonstrate my skill. God knows how the sound of a skillfully applied set of rudiments can make people stop and listen.

Thanks again for the award, including the free subscription, and for inspiring me to go on. I just wanted others to know that it's never too late to start. And unless someone comes from further away than Dallas, Texas, I'll be on stage again at next year's Festival!

> Gary Benkendorf Grapevine TX

#### A CALL FOR HELP...

Perhaps MD readers will find this letter strange. However, circumstances in Yugoslavia force me to write for help. I am the owner of Catch The Rhythm Drum School in Belgrade. It is the only one in Yugoslavia ever to exist. Over the years, we have been established as a communication center for Yugoslavian drummers. But now we are facing the hardest of times. The civil war is at its worst. The Yugoslavian government forbade any foreign payments almost two years ago, so we are unable to order anything from abroad.



#### **Zach Danziger**

Twenty-two-year-old Zach Danziger's approach to his instrument has always been elastic. Notes, rhythms, meters—all are stretched and squeezed over a given music's framework, whether this veteran of the Manhattan music scene is working with guitarists like Wayne Krantz, Chuck Loeb, and Leni Stern or keyboardist Charles Blenzig.

On Krantz's latest recording, the perceptively titled *Long To Be Loose* (Enja), Danziger gives a performance that best documents his style to date. Krantz, Danziger, and Lincoln Goines on bass have been playing together in Leni Stern's ethereal-sounding quartet for the past five years. The nearly telepathic communication developed among the players lays the groundwork for Krantz's expansive music, which depends on improvisation and spontaneity.

"This music is about being very creative on the spur of the moment, yet maintaining some guidelines. It's not entirely random," says Danziger. "It's an interactive-based style of playing. We avoid stock things. A lot of notes are going by, but we control it by expanding and contracting different time feels to give it a little

motion."

Danziger got his start as a child actor doing television and print ads (including a Zildjian ad in the '70s). But by the time he was fourteen he could be found at Drummers Collective playing along with early Michel Camilo records (whose live performances Zach never missed), which helped to land him the gig with Camilo for a time. More work followed with Special EFX, Bob Mintzer's big band, Eddie Gomez, Gil Evans' big band, Nelson Rangell, Herbie Mann, Steve Tavaglione, Jimmy Johnson, Leni Stern, and Chuck Loeb.

Zach currently teaches at Drummers Collective and does clinics for Yamaha. But his main interest is his demanding role in Krantz's trio. "Wayne has such a strong idea of what he wants; we're all trying to find other ways of approaching things like guitar solos and how we play behind him—creating something that wouldn't be thought of as a solo."

• Ken Micallef

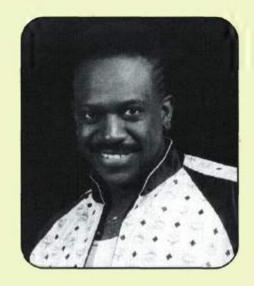
#### **Larry Crockett**

Larry Crockett prides himself on the variety of styles he is called upon to play, from the driving rock 'n' roll of Japan's number-one rock band, Hound Dog (which toured the States last year), to the Motown style of Martha Reeves, the funk of Menace, and the jazz of his own band, Crock Pot (which won first place in the Detroit Hennessey Jazz Competition). Within the last year, he also worked with Wolfman Jack, Houston Person, Etta Jones, the Shirelles, the Crystals, Dakota Staton, Lou Rawls, and Sons Of Rest. And in 1992, he did an Emmy-winning Diet Coke commercial with Elton John.

"Most of the people I work with don't know I play other styles," Crockett explains. "I think the jazz guys would be surprised if they saw me playing hard rock, throwing sticks in the air, going crazy.... And I think the rock guys would be shocked to see me with a suit and tie, swinging."

In addition to his playing gigs, Crockett is director of the percussion department at the New Brunswick Jazz Institute (which provides state-funded lessons for underprivileged kids) and has written a book called *Drumset Rudiments*.

• Robyn Flans



#### Gordy Knudtsen

Gordy Knudtson is currently on the road with Steve Miller in support of Steve's new album, *Wide River*. And what makes the situation even more special for Gordy is the fact that he also did the drumming on the album. "This is Steve's first studio album since 1988," says Gordy, "and I'm on all of it. There's live drums on everything, and I'm also triggering kick and snare samples on about six of the tunes."

Gordy has toured with Miller for several years, but this tour is different. "This is one of my first experiences with a major act that has everything falling into place," he explains. "Wide River,' the title track, is getting a lot of airplay, and several other tunes may become singles. The success of the record—coupled with the fact that Steve has been a major draw for many years without a new record—is giving us the opportunity to play a lot of two-night

stands, because the ticket demand is very high. We're also seeing a lot of young people who couldn't possibly know much of Steve's older material—in addition to the long-time fans who do. There's nothing like having an audience that spans a couple of generations."

Gordy is also the director of the drum department at Music Tech in Minneapolis. "Things are going better than ever there," he says. "I'm writing a lot of educational material, and I have a book in the works that takes technical exercises and puts them into a musical concept. It's a way to practice patterns around the drumset and develop fills, and it also makes rudiments really fun to play. It's still kind of taking form; I want to make sure everything is right."

• Rick Van Horn



#### **Chris Mars**

A lot has happened in Chris Mars' life since his last MD interview. First off, he was fired by the Replacements. According to Mars, "The Replacements were the kind of band where you did your role and nothing else. There was some bad tension if you did try to offer something else to the band. It got to a point where there was some stuff said about me in the press by [leader] Paul Westerberg. So I confronted Paul about it, and I think it was just a little too much for him to handle. I asked him to call Musician magazine and retract some of the stuff he had said. He agreed to do it, but then I guess it was too much for him to do. It's all for the better, though. The band was going to end anyway, and it was really no fun for me at that point."

Chris says that he actually had no plans to make records on his own after that. But while he was involved in doing illustration work (Chris is a skilled artist), the drummer began to experiment with a four-track machine he had bought. When he began sending demos around,

he never really expected to get a record deal. "I had fiddled around with it between tours with the Replacements. I would play guitar and come up with things at home, so I thought maybe I could venture into other areas. The confidence level was not there, though, because you're considered 'just the drummer.' I think the four-track really helped me a lot, though. It was kind of a surrogate band for me, and while the first few songs I wrote weren't very good, it began to build my confidence."

On his new album, 75% Less Fat, Mars played all the instruments except bass and clarinet. "I put the songs together by laying



down a click and then recording two rough rhythm guitar tracks, and then a rough vocal. I fill up all four tracks of my four-track and take that to the studio, and then me and J.D. Foster, who played bass on both of my albums, play bass and drums to the rough four-track tape. After that, I layer all the other stuff.

"I was pretty spooked by the whole process on my first solo record," Chris recalls. "But on this new one I feel pretty good about it. I had more fun than I *ever* did with the Replacements."

• Robyn Flans

#### NEWS...

Denny Fongheiser on new releases by Peter Frampton, Al Stewart, Diana Ross (three new songs for her greatest hits package), Anne Lewis, Kevin Montgomery, Clouseau, the Williams Brothers, Josh Kadison, Simple Minds, Kim Carnes, Nils Lofgren, River Phoenix, Jimmy Dell, and Katie Moffett and Deborah Allen (for a film called *Thing Called Love*), as well as some on-camera work. He also

recently did a live gig with Patty Smyth for the Pediatrics AIDS Foundation and produced three tracks for Lisa Nemzo, and is continuing to play and write for the TV show *Comic Strip Live*.

Josh Freese on a world tour with Paul Westerberg. He also recently recorded tracks for John Fogerty's long-awaited album.

Manu Katche is on Michael McDonald's recently released

Blink OfAn Eye.

**Michael Haid** on new album by David T. Chastain.

We're happy to see **Hugh Wright** back in the saddle with Boy Howdy after a somewhat miraculous recovery from his accident.

**Brian Tichy** in the studio with Vinnie Moore and Sass Jordan.

**Kyle Woodring** on tour with Survivor, supporting a new best-of album.

**Ian Paice** on the recent Deep Purple release, *The Battle Rages On*. Ian is in the midst of a world tour with the band.

**Aaron Turner** on the road with Peabo Bryson.

**Kurt Rasmussen** currently working with Paul Anka.

Congratulations to **Matt Frenette** and his wife Kimber Lee on the birth of their daughter, Emma Lu Anne.



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mounts are fully exterior so there is no shell penetration. Everything about the Mars series is designed with an eye for what the future professional needs. Stands are made strong yet compact. Pedals have tempered small link chain drives for fast action and the hihat has geared tension adjustment. The M4 features a fully adjustable

compact bass drum cymbal holder. The multi-position snare stand with Pro Lok levers provides maximum security in any playing angle.

The engineering quality that went into the M4 is an example of why artists like Gil Moore of Triumph pick Mapex.

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This five piece Mars power kit with maple lined shells features 18 x 22 bass drum for maximum low end projection. The M522P still retains a balanced sound because it comes with squared 12 x 12 and 13 x 13 mounted toms and 16 x 16 floor tom. The

deluxe seamless 14" chrome shell snare drum with fully adjustable strainer completes the kit. All stands and hardware are Mars 300 Series. This means strong single braced legs, mini-link chain drive pedals, adjustable tension hihat action, boom and upright cymbal stands with Pro Lok levers. The professional

two point contact lugs and exterior mount tom holder allow the M522P's power size shells to vibrate freely and really cut through.

Mapex is known for a power sound which is why it's the choice of players like Carmine Appice.

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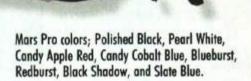
MORE ALTERNATIVES!

#### **MP602 Mars Pro**

(Shown in Pearl White)

This fusion design kit with maple lined interior and exterior is finished in natural lacquer. It features 20 x 16 bass drum, 10 x 9 and 12 x 10 mounted toms with 14 x 12 and 16 x 14 aero toms. This combination plus two point contact lug design allows for maximum shell vibration giving the MP602 a big sound in a very compact kit. The MP602 features deluxe double braced stands and includes the all new TS510 exterior mount aero tom stand. These toms project better than those using conventional floor legs plus they give drummers more positioning options for faster tom rolloff patterns.

The MP602 is available in striking colors that have a dynamic on stage look. Its rich look and stage quality were the reasons Mike Terrana, drummer with Yngwe Malmsteen chose Mapex.



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#### Adam Nussbaum

A while ago I had the opportunity to hear you with the Eliane Elias trio at London's Jazz Cafe. I noticed that sometimes the bass drum seemed to be going with constant 8th notes, with accents dropped in here and there. This consistent and fairly rapid pulsing effect occurred in the Latin-influenced and straighter grooves. It sounded great, and it obviously requires total physical control. I wondered if this is the technique called "feathering" that was mentioned in the "Jazz Drummers

Round Table" article [Sep. '91 *MD]* in which you were featured. If so, what might one practice to develop this technique?

Jonathan Thorpe Newcastle upon Tyne, England

Thanks for your enthusiasm and kind words. We all appreciate positive feedback. I utilize several different bass drum techniques, which are dictated by the musical situation. (This goes for hand technique, as well.) We have to have options and choices at our disposal.

When playing music where there is an ostinato 8th-note pattern occurring, I frequently slide my foot almost against the strap (or chain, as it may be) on the pedal, in order to shorten my stroke. This

will naturally make the beater impact softer, which, in the case you are referring to—an acoustic piano trio—was necessary. When playing at a high volume level, my foot is more centered on the pedal. When I *really* need to get some volume, I will raise my heel and play mostly on the ball of my foot.

"Feathering" is when you just barely touch the bass drum. It is generally done when playing "four on the floor." It's something that helps to put a bit of bottom on your sound, and it can help to create a groove. Feathering is a very subtle effect; something that is felt more than heard. But if you *stop* doing it, you will definitely notice it's not there. When you do it and it's too loud, however, the music will sound out of balance. The sound of feathering is generally warmer and more rounded on a bass drum with two heads, where each note can resonate. I'm still working at it myself, so I encourage you to experiment, have fun...and keep swinging!

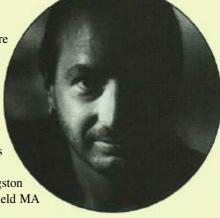


Photo by Lissa Wales

#### **Steve Smith**

I'd like to start by saying that you are one of my greatest influences. I grew up in Whitman, like yourself, and that's where I started drumming. I love your drumming from Journey, and you really put a tight groove on Stu Hamm's *The Edge*. I'd like to know what type and size of ride cymbal you used on "Our Dreams" on Stu's album. That is the best ride sound that I've ever heard.

Ray Kingston Brookfield MA



Hello, fellow Whitmanite! I also thought the cymbals were well-recorded on Stu's album. The ride I used on that album was a 22" A Zildjian ping ride. Also, at times during "Our Dreams," I played lightly on the bells of the crashes, which were 17" and 18" A Customs.







## Paiste-













Bobby Floridineil







Denny Carmass

Our drummers and percussionists know a good thing when they hear it. Gifted musicians can play anything they want to because of who they are. The featured artists chose Paiste cymbals because they sound best to them. That's why you should also consider Paiste cymbals.

But wait, you might say, top artists all over the world have good sounding cymbals regardless of which brand they play - so what?

Well, try and duplicate a set from a famous drummer playing another brand. You would have a hard time doing it, indeed. You see, only Paiste cymbals have

the unique, legendary consistency and quality that's our trademark.

With Paiste you can go out and get the cymbal your favorite drummer plays yourself and it will be the same sound and quality. That's because we check every single cymbal against the one and only master cymbal and do not allow a variation range like other companies. Think about it. Isn't that important?

We invite you to write to us about the cymbal sets on any Paiste artist. Ask the competition, too. Then go to your music store and compare. You'll be surprised how much more consistent we really are.



#### above all else

### Sound























Nicko McBrain





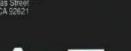
















#### Remo Encore Drums

I own a six-piece set of Remo drums, in their *Encore* series. These drums feature Remo's original *Acousticon SE* shells and separate, shell-penetrating tom mounts. The drums sound wonderful when miked, and I'd like to know if it would be possible to get another 16x18 floor tom with the old-style lugs and mounts. If not, would it be possible to buy a *Triumph* series floor tom, and possibly find some old-style lugs to put on it?

Scott Patrick Sudbury, Ontario, Canada

According to Remo's national sales manager, Dick Markus, "Remo *Encore* drums are still available throughout the world. However, you should be aware that we went to the *Acousticon 516* shell two years ago, and the older *SE* shell is no longer available. The newer shell is 5/16" thick, has an excellent bearing edge (for more sound projection than ever) and a limited lifetime warranty. You should purchase the drum you wish through your favorite retailer. If your *retailer* has any questions, please have them contact Remo, Inc., customer service, at (818) 983-2600."

#### Cymbal History

I have many questions regarding the history of jazz cymbals—Zildjian Ks in particular. Which were the most-used cymbals for jazz? Have there been cymbal trends that have changed over time among jazz drummers? When did Ks start to be manufactured in the U.S., and, before that, were they made exclusively in Turkey? Where were the first Zildjian factories, and where are they located now? What is the difference between a K that has the logo both underneath and on top and one that has the K logo on top and the Zildjian name on the bottom?

C. Bernardes Miami FL Whew! To answer all of those questions would require more space than we have available in this department. Luckily, though, there is a source for all of that information, along with much more on cymbal history. That source is *The Cymbal Book*, by Hugo Pinksterboer. It's published by Hal Leonard Publications, and you can order it through the *MD Library*. Look for the order form in this issue.

#### **Vintage Drum Sources**

I'm seeking information on any listings, newsletters, or other sources for collectors/purchasers of vintage percussion equipment—particularly Ludwig drums and Zildjian cymbals circa the 1960s. Also, are there any collector price guides that indicate the current and projected value of such equipment?

John Ettinghouse Toms River NJ

To answer your last question first, the only published guides for prices on collectible and vintage percussion equipment are the price lists covering merchandise offered by the various companies and drumshops that specialize in such equipment. They are the ones who more or less establish the "market price," because they pretty much *are* the market. Obviously, if you are dealing with an individual buyer, price is determined as much by that buyer's desire to own the item and your ability to negotiate as by any market-related factors.

You can obtain these price lists by writing to such companies as Vintage Drum Center (Rt. 1, Box 129, Libertyville, IA 52567), Blair 'N Drums (3148 Plainfield Ave. NE, Suite 250, Grand Rapids, MI 49505), Al Drew's Music (526 Front St., Woonsocket, RI 02895), Pro Percussion, Inc. (119 Old Hickory Blvd. E., Madison, TN 37115), or Rebeats Vintage Drum Products (P.O. Box 6, Alma, MI 48801). Watch MD's *Drum Market* for the names

and addresses of other businesses or individuals in this market. For additional vintage drum information, you can subscribe to the *Not So Modern Drummer* newsletter published by John Aldridge, at 4989 Elsenhower St., Apt. B, Boulder, CO 80303.

#### **Broken Snares**

I have a problem with my snare strands breaking quite frequently on my Yamaha 8x14 snare drum. Is it my strainer or my tuning technique that causes this?

Jeffrey Starr Flint MI

Snare wires can break for a number of reasons. Most traditional coiledwire snares are attached to the brackets at either end with solder. Due to the repeated vibration caused by normal playing, the wires can work loose from the solder. This can easily be seen, because the wire will dangle from the opposite end of the snare set and there will be a tiny hole in the solder where it pulled out. If this is the case, the likelihood is that the solder join is weakening on the entire snare set, and you should replace the snares.

When snare wires actually break at some point along the wire, however, it is usually the result of more pressure being applied to the wires than they can endure. When you strike the top head of the drum, the impact pressure is transferred to the bottom head, which bulges outward and downward. This, in turn, presses downward on the snare wires. That downward pressure causes the wires to pull inward against the brackets at either end. If the wires are not tensioned too tightly, they can flex enough to move along with the bulging snare head. If they are too tight and cannot flex, something has to give, and one or more wires will snap.

Many variables are involved in this equation. The snare tension is the most obvious, but the tension of the snare-side head can also be varied in order to alleviate the prob-

continued on page 46

The Great Performers Give You Both.

POWER & SENSITIVITY

That's why
world-class
chummers
insist on Shure
drum kil
microphones
to deliver even
sold stroke and
subtle nuance
of their musica
expression

No cine understands he drummer's diverse needs like Shure which is why only Shure offers a complete line of drum microphones with models specifically tailored for all applications

To power you kit with anything less would be insensitive



KICK SMOT



Snare Beta 5



Overall SMF



Overhead: VRN



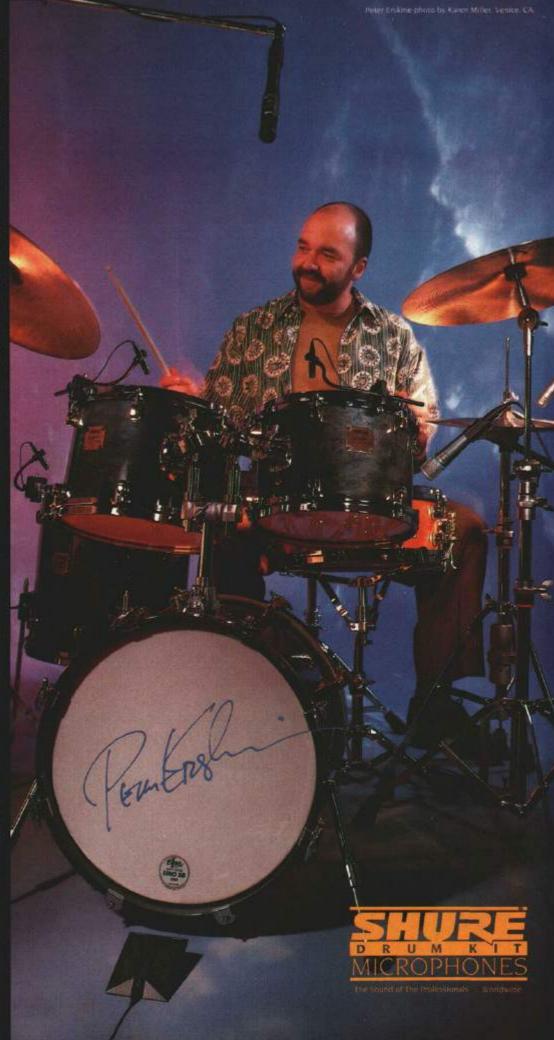
forms SNIOR



HI-HIM SMO



Cymbals SM81



## If they look this good, ima

Anyone who has visited their local drum shop lately has probably heard the buzz

about this kit.
A drumset
that looks and
sounds like
nothing we
have ever
made before. A

drumset that performs beyond expectation.
The Masters Series from Pearl.

We have taken the finest hand selected, air cured and aged 100% maple and 100% birch and produced thin 5mm shells using our patented heat compression shell forming process. We've added proportional reinforcement rings at both top and bottom and cut ultra-precise bearing edges. Masters

Series drum shells represent the perfect blend of today's state of the art manufacturing processes combined with

Every part of this drumset features new lowmass designs in order allow the shells to

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Tension casings,
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brackets, counter
hoops, bass drum
claws, everything
that touches the

shell has been given great consideration.

You will also notice all mounting hardware has been removed from the shell. Our new Integrated Mounting System holds the drum by the counter hoop, never touching the shell. We could explain the advantages and features of these drums and fill many pages, but the real test of any drum is how it sounds to you.

Simply compare 100% Maple
Masters Custom, or 100%
Birch Masters Studio, to any
other drum made by any
other manufacturer and let
your ears be the judge. We

think you'll agree, you've waited too long for a drumset this good.



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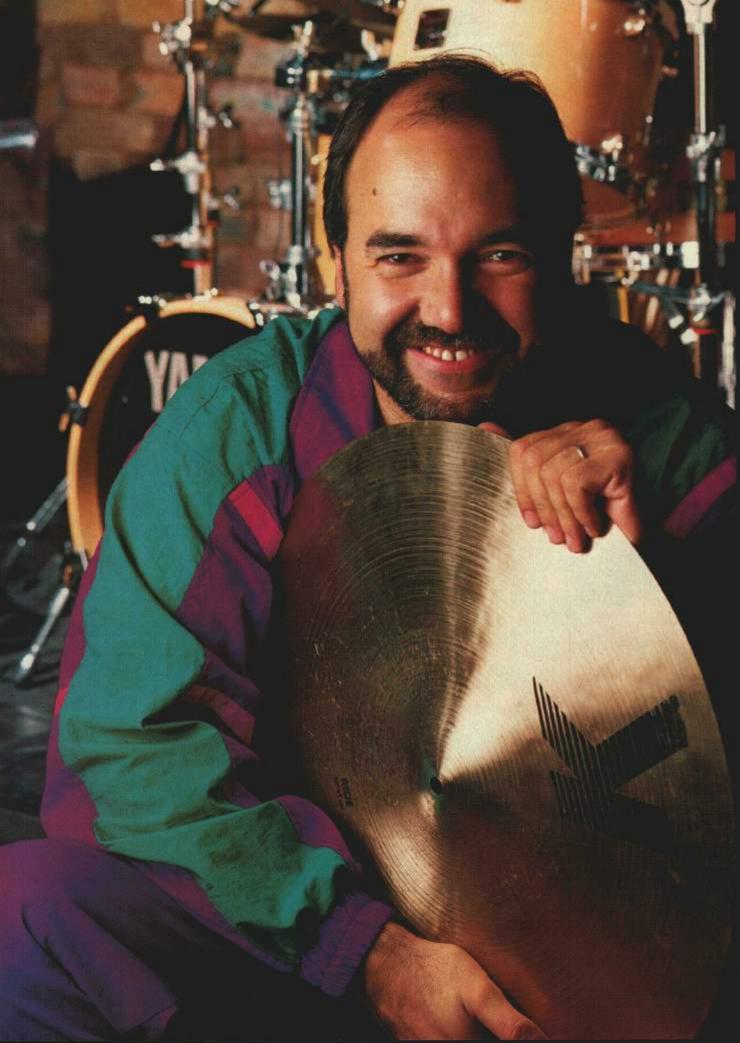
reminiscent of vintage thin shell drums.

**Peasel.**The best reason to play drums.



## gine how they must sound.







## peter erskine

### a work in progress

"There's a terrific chapter in this book about the sense of hearing," Peter Erskine says, reaching for *A Natural History Of The Senses* by Diane Ackerman. He's sitting in a multicolored stuffed chair ("A real Hollywood chair," he says, delighted by its sheer gaudiness) next to a grand piano. Out in the yard, his kids are constructing a fort from cardboard boxes that the new Yamaha drumset Peter had just secured for the upcoming Steely Dan tour arrived in.

"Here it is," he says, and then reads aloud: "Polyphony coincided with the building of the great Gothic cathedrals, and the birth of harmony with the culmination of the Renaissance and the beginning of modern science and mathematics—that is, the two great changes in our understanding of space.'

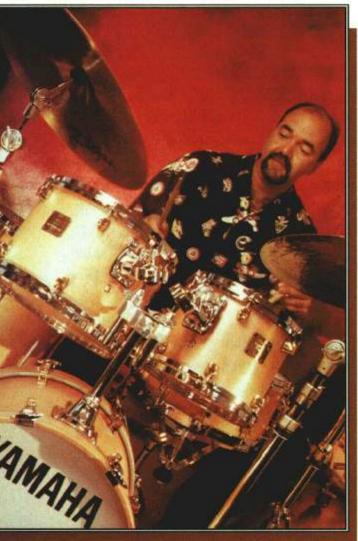
By Rick Mattingly

"Then there is an asterisk," Peter says, "and an observation made by Pauline Oliveros. This is what caught my eye when I was reading this: 'Any space is as much a part of the instrument as the instrument itself.'

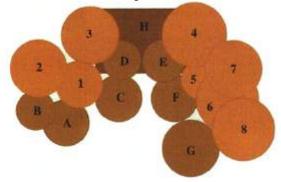
"What interested me," he says, laying the book aside, "was this whole thing about science and music. Coincidentally, I was reading another book called *Music Of The Spheres*, and it was tracing the development of music and science through the ages. During the time of Pythagoras, music and science were seen as two great ideals of how perfect the universe was—these natural laws and orders. Once you got into the Romantic age, with composers like Beethoven, music had become a much more subjective, personal expression, and science had started to understand that the world isn't such a perfect kind of place. Now science is studying chaos, and it certainly is a chaotic society."

Erskine pauses a moment to let what he's said sink in. "I like the fact that you can express yourself so many different ways with music," he says.

"Going back to that thing about space being as much a part of the instrument as the instrument itself," he continues, "that was very true when we made the ECM recording *You Never Know*. In the room at Rainbow Studio in Oslo, we had a grand piano with



Peter's Steely Dan Tour Kit



**Drumset:** Yamaha *Maple Custom* in natural maple finish

- A. 13x13 floor tom
- B. 4x10 Montineri soprano snare drum (suspended)
- C. 5 1/2 x 14 brass snare drum
- D. 8x 10 tom
- E. 8 x 12 tom F. 14 x 14 floor tom
- G. 16x16 floor tom
- H. 14 x 22 bass drum

Heads: Evans Genera

Brushcoat on snare, Batter and
Resonant on toms, Genera EQ 1
(or 3) on bass drum

Hardware: Yamaha 800 series

**Sticks:** Vic Firth 5A (Peter also uses Firth *Erskine* signature model, 7A, *Buddy Rich* signature model, *Emil Richards* maraca/timp mallets)

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" New Beat hi-hats
- 2. 17" K dark medium-thin crash
- 3. 18" A Custom crash
- 4. 20" K ride
- 5. 13" K/Z hi-hats
- 18" K Custom ride with three rivets
- 16" K dark medium-thin crash
- 8. 18" K dark thin crash

**Electronics:** (not for tour, but general use) *drumKAT*, Yamaha *RY30*, S&S Stinger *P1* pads, *SST-1* triggers, and *Stealth 7000* bass drum triggers

**Microphones:** Shure VP88 (stereo overheads), *SM91* (kick), *SM98* (toms), *SM57* or *Beta* (snare)

"Just as important as all of the particulars of my setup is my friend and most-trusted drumtech (what a luxury), Gary Grimm."

the lid open, the drums were in the same room, there was no blanketing, no go-bos [baffles]. I played the drums differently than I might have had I been in a drum booth with a lot of padding and isolation. Sonically, there were some physical restraints suggested by the space where we were making the music. On one hand it was inhibiting, and I knew I couldn't play the drums just any old way. But on the other hand, imposing a discipline in the artistic process can be very revealing and liberating."

Peter Erskine's speech often takes the form of a good musical composition. He'll start with an introductory theme (for instance, a quote from a book), introduce the main theme (the second quote), develop the material ("What interested me..."), resolve the development ("I like the fact..."), and then resolve the primary theme (explain how the quote relates to his specific circumstances). Similarly, just as Erskine's voice will drop to near whisper level when he is speaking of things he feels very strongly about, so too will the music he cares for the most be played at the softer end of the dynamic range, with a minimum of explosive cymbal crashes and accents.

It is sometimes said that life is not a destination, it is a journey, and those who get the most out of it are the ones who take the time to enjoy the trip and explore the side roads and scenery. The ultimate goal has more to do with discovering an interesting route and maybe blazing a few new trails along the way than in

actually reaching a specific location.

Consciously or not, Erskine lives that philosophy in the pursuit of his art. During the first few years of his career, he seemed to delight in making left turns. His first major gigs, with Stan Kenton at the age of seventeen and then with Maynard Ferguson, suggested that he was going to follow a fairly mainstream jazz direction, albeit with a modern rock-influenced consciousness.

Fans and critics alike were astounded when he joined Weather Report, the reigning electric fusion band of the '70s, which featured keyboardist Joe Zawinul, saxophonist Wayne Shorter, and bassist Jaco Pastorius. But despite his longevity with the group, Erskine never quite

became known as a fusion drummer, as he continually turned up in acoustic jazz combo settings on albums and in clubs, and even appeared on folk singer Joni Mitchell's tribute album to jazz bassist Charles Mingus—an album that totally defied categoriza-

"Sometimes

I wonder if

I should play

a little more....

Naw, I like the

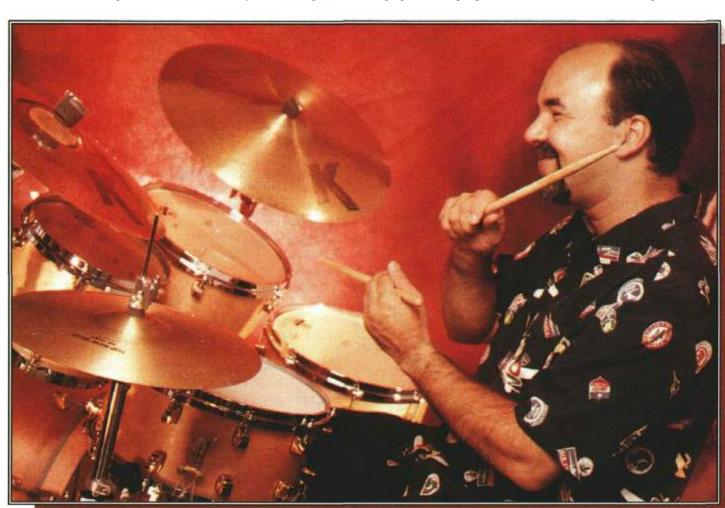
way it feels."

Moving to New York in the early '80s, Erskine seemed to be moving in a hard-bop direction, notably with his early work in Steps Ahead, which featured saxophonist Michael Brecker, vibist Mike Mainieri, pianist Don Grolnick, and bassist Eddie Gomez,

> and in countless club gigs and record dates. But he also became fascinated with electronics and MIDI technology, and enjoyed doing jingle and soundtrack sessions in recording studios. And as Steps Ahead got mired in personnel changes and conflicting priorities, Erskine began working more and more with various combinations of New York-based jazz musicians such as guitarists John Scofield, Mike Stern, John Abercrombie, and Bill Frisell, saxophonists Bob Berg, Joe Lovano, and Bob Mintzer, trumpet player Randy Brecker, keyboardists Eliane Elias and Warren Bernhardt, and bassists Will Lee

and Marc Johnson.

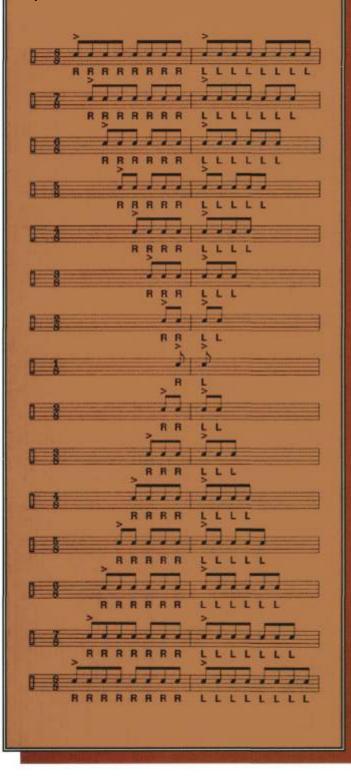
Erskine physically relocated to California in 1987, but musically he became a citizen of the world, spending increasing amounts of time touring and recording in Europe and Japan, maintaining his New York associations, and still managing to develop a presence in the clubs and recording studios of



hoto by Karen Mille.

#### The Erskine Warm-Up

The following warm-up exercise is Peter's personal favorite. According to Erskine, "These are not different rhythmic subdivisions. Each note is played very evenly, non-stop. I don't start off too fast, and I make sure that both hands are as consistent and similar as possible. I also do it at different tempos. What's neat about this exercise is that you don't get into one of those routines where your mind goes blank and the sticking becomes automatic. It demands that you concentrate and control the strokes."



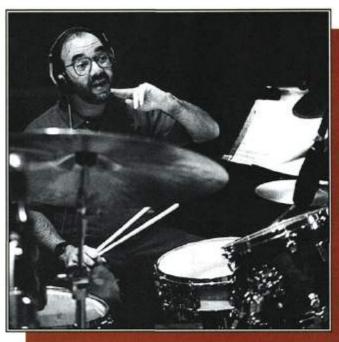


Photo by Shunsuke Yamamoto

his home state.

"I travel so much now that I feel comfortable playing pretty much anywhere I go," he says. "I'm like a tourist, and I try to fit in wherever I am. The drumming identity, I think, remains a constant. I'm not worried about maintaining some geographical agenda, like, 'This is the way we play in New York.' Who cares? Labels are confining—ultimately they can become dangerous."

Paradoxically, as Erskine has spread himself over an everwidening range of situations and styles, his musical identity has become stronger and more focussed. Whether it's the freedom of his playing in the acoustic-trio setting of his solo album *You Never Know*, the tight, precise traditional approach to big-band drumming on Bob Mintzer's *Departure*, the pop sensibility evident on Gary Burton's new album, *We Can Try Love Again*, which features vocalist Rebecca Parris, or the near anarchy of his playing on the upcoming John Abercrombie album on ECM (untitled at the time of this writing), Erskine's drumming is marked by a consistency of approach that is all the more remarkable for not being based around signature licks and patterns. It's more of a feel and an attitude in which the only goal is to serve the music.

But Erskine is quick to point out that his playing is not simply reactive. "I used to think that creative music making implied that I react to everything around me," he says. "But if you're not careful, you're commenting on everything that is played, which is one step away from Mickey-Mousing everyone else's ideas without contributing your own statements. You must also make statements that other people will play off of, because ideas have to emanate from all the instruments.

"The other thing that a lot of musicians—especially drummers—sometimes confuse creativity with is busyness. They think, 'I'm being busy, so I'm being creative.' As any other drummer does, I have my own vocabulary of rhythms or patterns that I'm likely to express myself with. But you don't want things just rolling off the end of your sticks because you've spent so much time practicing them.

"There are ways you can practice that will better prepare you for playing interactively while still observing the necessary space. For instance, record yourself playing some basic time-keeping in any musical style. When you first listen back to it, the tendency is to listen from a drummer's standpoint and notice how well you executed this or that and how interesting it was and so on.

"But try listening back and imagining that you have to play

bass or piano along with it. Is there room for a bass or keyboard? You might start becoming aware that something larger needs to be honored. You have to serve the music. That requires putting a little bit of ego aside and playing for the tune. This is something the great pop drummers have known all along. The more I listen to Jeff Porcaro's drumming, the more I understand a drummer like Paul Motian. To me, there's a very strong connection because they both serve the music in their drumming."

Much of Erskine's own ability to serve the music comes from the fact that he is dealing with an incredibly wide range of resources. His conversation is punctuated with references to literature. art, science, and classical music, but he's also well aware of pop culture and tends to be up on the latest jokes. Likewise, as he makes his way through a piece of music, Peter will combine elements from a wide palette of influences and colors, feeling free to go off on tangents and make asides, secure that he will never lose sight of the main focus.

But his ability to draw on so many sources is dependent on his willingness to discipline himself in terms of specific elements, as illustrated by a recent exercise in restricting his setup.

"One day," Erskine recalls,
"I was watching a video of
the Miles Davis Quintet of

the early '60s with Tony Williams, and he was only using two cymbals. It was amazing, and as I was watching and listening, I started wondering why I had all these other cymbals around me. I remembered my teacher in college, George Gaber, telling me that every once in a while I should go out with just a snare drum, bass drum, hi-hat, and cymbal, explaining that if you can do the gig that way, you can do it that much better with the whole enchilada sitting there. I had a European tour coming up with

Kenny Wheeler, so I made the decision to only take two cymbals."

Not surprisingly, Erskine found that imposing that kind of discipline opened up new possibilities. "It forced me to develop more of a relationship with each cymbal," he explains. "A cymbal can function more than just one way: You can ride on it, you can crash it, you can do anything you want. You discover different tonal qualities, and your touch really gets a workout because when a soloist changes, you don't have a bunch of different cymbals to choose from.

"I knew that one of the cymbals I would take would be a 22" Pre-Aged K because of the creamy kind of sound quality. But the second cymbal needed to have certain kinds of crash qualities as well as ride capabilities, so I called Lennie DiMuzio at Zildjian and explained the idea, and he sent me an 18" K ride that sounded cool when I crashed on it and also worked great as a ride cymbal. I put three rivets in it close together, which is an idea I got from Louie Bellson."

It wasn't just a matter of finding the right cymbals, though. Erskine's signature stick, made by Vic Firth, features a small, round tip, which he originally favored because it produced a consistent sound no matter at what angle the stick struck

Prime Peter

Here are the albums Peter Erskine lists as those most representative of his drumming.

representative of

Artist

Peter Erskine
Peter Erskine
John Abercrombie, Marc Johnson,
Peter Erskine
Kenny Wheeler
Joey Calderazzo
Peter Erskine
Jimmy Haslip
Vince Mendoza
Steps Ahead

You Never Know Sweet Soul new release \*

Album Title

ler Widow In The Window
zzo The Traveler
ne Motion Poet
ip Arc
zza Start Here
d Modern Times
\* untitled at press time

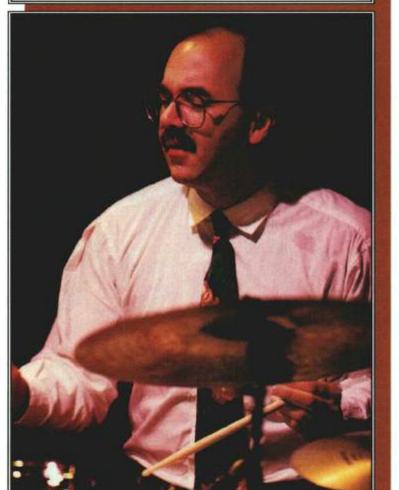
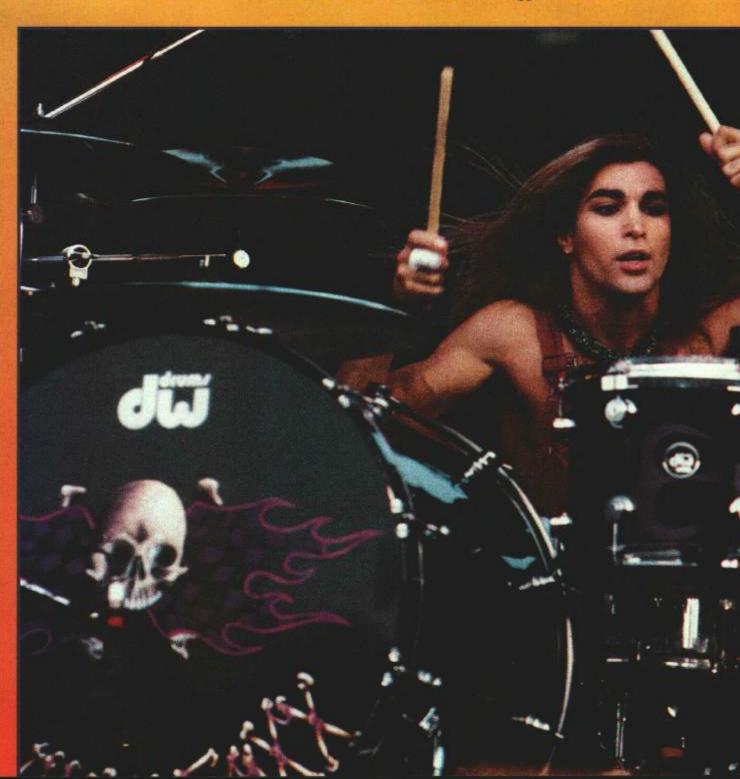


Photo by Shunsuke Yamamoto

continued on page 49

## VINCE NEIL'S WINCE NEIL'S WINCE



ictor Cerny, Jr. ultimately became Vikki Foxx through a series of name changes and matching personas during his band-jumping days on the Chicago glam-rock scene. A self-described screw-up in school, Victor juggled his interests in sports and music before unintentionally gravitating towards the drums. At first it was just a way to pass the time during after-school detention. Little did he know that it would pave the way for a career that, to this point, has been little short of charmed.

Foxx was just nineteen years old when Enuff Z'Nuff signed a contract with Atco Records—and not much older when Rolling Stone lauded the band for their self-titled 1989 debut, hailing the group as sort of a fresh tease in an overcrowded salon of hair bands. Enuff Z'Nuff's critically acclaimed second record didn't do the business of its predecessor, and Foxx had just recorded a third with the group when Vince Neil phoned him—out of the blue—and asked him to appear on a video. When Neil later asked him to perform on his first solo record away from Motley Crue, Foxx didn't miss the opportunity—despite the fact that this decision caused a row with his mates in Enuff Z'Nuff that would eventually lead to his firing. From a career standpoint, though, Foxx, now

From a career standpoint, though, Foxx, now 25, definitely took a step skyward. No longer in a band struggling to reach the big leagues, he'd latched onto a star who brought him there in one fell swoop. Vince Neil's *Exposed* tickled *Billboard's*, Top-10 album chart upon its spring release, and the band spent most of the summer supporting Van Halen's nationwide tour.

From a musician's standpoint, Foxx says he's never enjoyed more leg room. The drummer admits he's not in the band for his array of blistering chops. Rather, he's there to "put on a show" and provide solid meter for Neil's familiar raunch 'n' roll. When he wants to throw in a double-kick roll or a one-bar kick-tom pattern, though, nobody throws up a stop sign. For his part, Foxx says success breeds happiness and that, with Neil, he's never had more reason to smile.

BY MATT PEIKEN

PHOTOS BY MARK WEISS/ANGLES



**MP:** How did you get the gig with Vince?

VF: I'd always been a big fan of Motley, and Tommy [Lee] had heard me play earlier, when Enuff Z'Nuff did a show at the Whiskey. I remember that everyone was there—Fred Coury, Randy Castillo, all the L.A. rock drummers. Tommy Aldridge was even there, and he was one of my all-time idols, so I was really nervous. But at that time, Motley and Enuff Z'Nuff had the same manager, Doc McGhee, and we had worked with this A&R lady at Atco named Karen Dumont, who turned Tommy Lee on to our stuff. I guess Tommy had said that he liked the band and liked my playing.

Anyway, years roll around, Vince gets fired from Motley, and he remembers that Tommy digs me. I was in Chicago at the time. I'd been out partying with this chick, and I check my messages and hear, "Hey, this is Vince Neil. I'm tryin' to get a hold of Vik Foxx; here's my home phone number...." I looked at this chick and, I swear, I rewound that message and played it about five times before it sunk in. I had just finished the Animals album with Enuff Z'Nuff. But I called Vince back. and he asked me to do a video for this song he was doing for the movie Encino Man. And I was thinking, sure, why not? I was done with my tracks, so I didn't think it would hurt. If anything, it would help my band, Enuff Z'Nuff.

So I did it, but my band got pissed off. Even though they let me do it, they



never let me live it down after the video came out. Every time people would come up to us and ask me what band I played in, [singer] Donnie Vie would be like, [in a sarcastic tone] "Vince Neil,"

#### FOXX FIRE

Here are the albums Vikki Foxx lists as those most representative of his drumming.

Artist
Enuff Z'Nuff
Enuff Z'Nuff
Enuff Z'Nuff
Vince Neil

Album Title
Enuff Z'Nuff
Strength
Animals With Human Intelligence
Exposed

And here are the ones he says he listens to most for inspiration.

Artist
KISS
KISS
Led Zeppelin
Deep Purple
Motley Crue
Tony MacAlpine
Van Halen
Osmonds

Album Title
Dressed To Kill
Alive
Physical Graffiti
Machine Head
Shout At The Devil
Maximum Security
Van Halen
Osmonds Live

Drummer
Peter Criss
Peter Criss
John Bonham
Ian Paice
Tommy Lee
Deen Castronovo
Alex Van Halen
Jay Osmond

even before I'd *considered* being in Vince's band. Then the MTV movie awards came up and I was scheduled to be there because my cousin, Anna Chlumsky, is the actress who did *My Girl*. Vince was supposed to play, and he needed a drummer. We talked and he said that since I'd done the video and I was going to be at the awards anyway, why not come and play with him? So I did it, and after that he asked me to do his record. So I went back, asked my band, and they said no. But I said I was doing it anyway, and they fired me because of it.

**MP:** Did you intend at that time to still be in Enuff Z'Nuff?

VF: I believed in Enuff Z'Nuff. I'd been with those guys for six years, I'd known them for eight. I'd hung with them and they were like brothers, but I got treated like shit! I'd always been the straight-and-narrow guy in the band,



and even with all the drugs they were doing, I stuck it out. Then when I wanted to do something constructive for myself—and for the band, to get a little recognition—they shot me down. They wouldn't let me do any of this stuff for the T.J. Martell Foundation [one of the music industry's largest charitable organizations], like races and baseball. They wanted Chip and Donnie to be the names in the band. But my goal was just to be a rock 'n' roll drummer.

MP: How was it at first with Vince?

VF: I'd talked to him a couple times on the phone, which was cool, but I was very nervous the first day I walked in to do that video. He was the only guy from Motley Crue I hadn't met yet, and I thought he'd be like a typical rock singer, just a jag-off, [laughs] But he was so cool and made me feel so at home. Compared to Donnie...I mean I love the guy, but I'm still trying to learn how to get along with him after eight years. With Vince, we have the same interests—cars and chicks. We were like bros from the start.

**MP:** Even though you had Vince's band to go to, was it hard leaving Enuff Z'Nuff behind?

VF: It was, and I still miss them once in a while. But I've read interviews with them since I've left and now I think the whole thing was for the best. Aside "MY CHICK BACK
HOME TOLD ME
THAT IF I COULD
NAIL THOSE
OSTINATOPATTERNS TERRY
BOZZIO PLAYS,
SHE'D BUY ME A
HARLEY. WELL,
I HAD TO GO OUT
AND BUY IT
MYSELF, OF
COURSE."

from Vince just being a really cool guy, I'm happier now. I got to play what I wanted to on his record, and it shows. With Enuff Z'Nuff, I was handcuffed. We'd do a take and they'd tell me there were too many chops in there or whatever. They'd take an attitude like, "Hey, this could be a hit single," so they'd cut everything I did or would want to do another take. It wasn't like I was play-

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## 9 8 D 12 9 10 11 6 5 B 7 A A 6 5 4 3 1 2 13

#### VIK'S KIT

**Drumset:** DW in black "Spindrift" finish

- A. 14 x 16 floor tom
- B. 12 x 14 floor tom
- C. 6 1/2 x 14 snare drum
- D. 10 x 12 tom
- E. 20 x 28 bass drum

Hardware: All DW, including a 5002A double pedal

**Heads:** Remo coated *Ambassadors* on all toms, clear *Ambassador* on kick (with Danmar double pedal head pads), coated CS. (blackdot) on snare

**Sticks:** Regal Tip Quantum 1000 and 3000 models

**Cymbals:** Zildjian (all *Platinums*)

- 1. 19" Rock crash
- 2. 12" A splash
- 3. 19" Rock crash
- 4. 10" EFX
- 5. 18" Rock crash
- 6. 10" A splash
- 7. 18" China Boy high
- B. 10" Icebell
- 9. 10" A splash
- 10. 17" Rock crash
- 11. 14" Rock hi-hats
- 12. 24" Ping ride
- 13. 40" Taiwan gong

**Electronics**: Acupads, LP Spikes

# THE SINGING DRUMS OF PIERRE FAVRE

e's been described in the European press as a poet, painter, and sculptor. His work has been called lyrical, passionate, and mysterious. Pretty remarkable, considering Pierre Favre is a drummer.

But Pierre's not just any drummer. He's one of the most respected percussionists working in Europe today.

Favre's work knows no boundaries. Whether it's free jazz, ethnic, or contemporary classical music, he has that rare ability to enhance the music around him in a magical way.

Favre was born in the Swiss town of Le Locle, and has come a long way in his forty years of drumming. Today he maintains residences in both Paris and Zurich, and spends much of his time traveling to the many concerts, workshops, and recording sessions he is involved in. Despite all the accolades he's received, Pierre remains a very soft-spoken man with a great sense of humor.

Favre's introduction to drums seemed to be more by chance than design. "I started when I was fifteen," he says. "My brother was an accordion player

**By Michael Bettine** 



and needed a drummer to play with him for a dance. He just showed me the basic rhythms. I learned marches, waltzes—all those rhythms for making people dance.

"I *loved* it," Pierre recalls. "I took to it magically, and I never had a teacher." At seventeen Favre went on the road with dance bands. Later, at nineteen, he went to the Radio Orchestra, where he was engaged in Basel, Switzerland for three years. But he left that gig to play jazz, because, as he says, "That is my great love."

Two of Favre's main jazz-drum influences were the pre-eminent melodic drummers of their day. "My first influence," he says, "was Max Roach. Later, through records, I discovered Sidney Catlett. At the time, bebop was what I liked, but it was too modern for the musicians around me. I had to play a lot with Dixieland bands, and I always sounded a little too modern for them. But I had good technique and got to play a lot of gigs. In a certain way, I had to learn backwards. I went back to see how all the older drummers were playing—things like playing on all four beats on the bass drum."

Photos by Christophe Rossi

After looking back and studying the great drummers before him, Pierre took a giant leap forward in the late '60s in his percussion concept. Up to this time he had made his living primarily playing in big bands and radio bands. "But in 1967 I met pianist Irene Schweizer, and I started to play free jazz. At the same time I was looking around at musicians like Coltrane and wondering where it was going. So I started exploring all the different African and Indian things."

Schweizer has been on the forefront of free and improvised

music in Europe for many years. In the late '60s she became Pierre's "secretary" at Paiste when Favre founded the drummers service, and she also played with him in the Pierre Favre Trio. Since 1980, though, they have worked together as a duo. This pairing has been documented on a recent live release by the Swiss label Intakt. Recorded in 1990, it shows the two in a true musical dialog. Whether furious like "Flying Over The Limmat," or humorous like "Una Tarantella Fantastica," this is the essence of improvised music. Both musicians lead and fol-



low at the same time. Listening to each other is all-important. With his regular kit augmented by a range of African bells, tambourine, and various percussion instruments, Pierre often sounds like two drummers—yet always playing with the utmost taste.

"I remember a kind of undercurrent—a certain fluid feeling," says Pierre when asked about when he first started playing free jazz. "I couldn't really tell where it was going, but it was so good because I felt a strength coming out of it. It was a different strength than swing—like waves coming out. I don't know what



that was; maybe it was the time that gave that feeling. Later I realized that a certain form in the development of my playing was very much European. I just knew to go with it, don't hold back, just play it out. And that's what happened for some time. Later I started thinking that it was *very* free, and I loved it."

Back then, Pierre had a small Ludwig *Jazzette* drumkit. With his newfound rhythmic freedom, it was only natural to look for more sounds to enhance the melodic ideas he was beginning to develop. "In 1966," he says, "I was working with the Paiste brothers. I remember first bringing a gong on stage, and later on I had more cymbals. All this came from my trying out sounds for Paiste. We had long workshops with Toomas and Robert Paiste where we kind of listened to the metal. I was always a very cymbal-oriented drummer. But at Paiste I started to hear different things and tried to bring them on stage. I remember the musicians not liking that, saying, 'Come on, play the drums!'

"So in 1969 I made a solo tape. I thought that if they don't really like it, I'll do it as a solo. I gave the tape to Manfred Eicher from ECM records, and he made the record *Drum Conversation*, and it sold like crazy everywhere. So in mid 1969 I went on stage with it, and that's where the whole thing really started with that kind of drumming—the metals and all that.

"Actually, that's where I discovered how to use space more in

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#### The Favre Orchestra

Pierre Favre's drumkit is a rather unique conglomeration of instruments. At the core of his set is a 1968 Ludwig drumset, featuring 14x24 and 14x18 bass drums, 8x12 and 9x13 toms, a 14x14 floor tom, and a 5x14 wood snare. All the drums have calf heads. Other membranophones on Pierre's kit include three RotoToms and two tambours.

When it comes to cymbals, Pierre may be the record holder for most metal on a drumkit. His choice of cymbal is Paiste: three ride cymbals (flat ride, *Paiste Mellow, Paiste Full*), one *Sound Creation* China, *Paiste* Dark Medium hi-hats, two vertical cymbal stacks each containing five weight-graduated crash cymbals, two and a half octaves of tuned gongs, seven heavy tuned gongs, two 38" symphonic gongs, five pairs of African bells, and two octaves of Paiste *Sound Discs*. This setup allows Pierre a few musical choices!

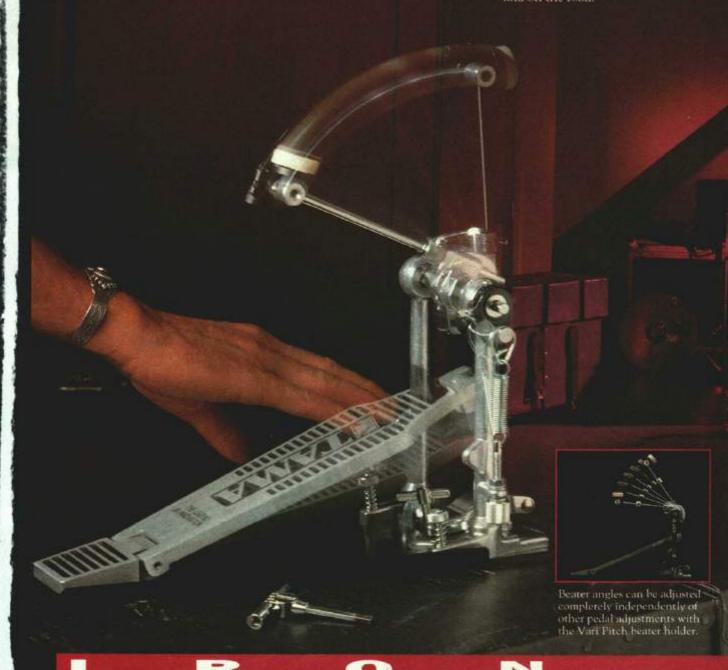
#### The Beauty of IRON COBRA

JEFF CHONIS AND HARRY MCCARTHY of

Drum Paradise discuss the versatility and

durability of Tama's Iron Cobra

Drum Paradise's client list reads like the Who's Who of drumming: Simon Phillips, Kenny Aronoff, Stan Lynch, Randy Castillo and many others. They've worked with every brand of drum equipment imaginable, halping drummers achieve the right sound and set-up...in the studio, in concert and on the road.



"In our business the last thing we need—whether it's during a show or in the studio—is a broken pedal. So it's important to us that all the Iron Cobra parts are state of the art and the craftsmanship is excellent," remarks leff Chonis.

"Also, while it may be a cliche, time is morey. A good pedal should set up quickly and be flexible," adds partner Harry McCarthy. "With standard pedals, when you adjust one parameter, something else changes—which is time-consuming. But the adjustments on the Iron Cobra are completely independent so setting up to anybody's style takes almost no time at all."

"Another major plus is...well, the only word I can think of is changeability," says Jeff. "If someone wants a quick change of kick drum sound, Iron Cobra has three different beater styles. Even the cams are interchangeable! I can't think of another pedal where you can so easily transform the style of pedal from one type to another.

"But the bottom line is you have to experience a pedal like this to really appreciate how smooth and fast it is. Try using just one finger to test the section on any of the four Iron Cobra models—and then compare it to anything else. You'll feel the difference immediately."

Finishes Harry, "We've seen just about every pedal made...and these pedals represent a major advance. Every serious drummer needs to experience them."

## RTAMA

For more information on Tama Drums and Hardware send \$5,00 (\$4,00 in Canada) to: Tama, Dopt, MDD32, P.O. Beec 886, Bensalem, PA 19020 • P. O. Boy 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403 • In Canada: 2165-46th Ave., Lachine, Queber H8U-2PT.





With the new Iron Cobra Speedo-Ring, footboard heights are now fully and individually adjustable.



Iron Cobra HP70 models feature the Rolling Glide cam (left) which delivers uniformly even reponse. On the double-chained HP90 Power Glide cams, the cam radius becomes shorter as the beater gets closer to the drum head for more speed and power.

Harry McCarthy (sitting) and Jeff Chonis - Drum Paradise is located in Los Angeles, CA



## **Mapex Mars Professional Drumkit**

by Rick Mattingly

Here's an encouraging example of how "entry level" quality is getting better and better.

As top-of-the-line drums get better and better, lower-line drums seem to be improving too, as design innovations and manufacturing expertise trickle down to the less expensive models. Consequently, it's getting easier to find kits of extremely good quality that are, happily, also priced quite reasonably. The Mapex *Mars Professional* series drumkits are such instruments.

The MP525 kit I received for review consisted of a 16x22 bass drum, a 16x16 floor tom, 11x13 and 10x12 rack toms, a 6 1/2x14 snare drum, one straight cymbal stand, hi-hat and bass drum pedals, and a snare drum stand.

#### Drums

Mars Professional series drums feature 9-ply construction: The inner and outer plies are of maple; the plies in between are of mahogany. The finishes are lacquer, meaning that there is no glued-on layer of plastic or metal over the wood. The kit we received had a slate blue finish, which was so dark as to appear almost black. Seven other lacquer finishes are available.

The toms and bass drum featured "minimum contact" lugs, which consisted of a Gladstone-type tubular lug held in place with two mounts, each attached to the shell by a single screw. Twenty years ago, using so few screws to attach lugs would have been considered a cost-cutting measure. Today, with the emphasis on letting shells resonate, it is seen as a mark of quality. Each of the rack toms had six lugs, while the floor tom and bass drum each had eight.

The rack-tom mounts do not require a tube to be inserted into the shell of the drum. Each drum has a mount that slides down onto a vertical hex rod and is tightened with a single wing screw—similar to the way you slide legs into the mounts on floor toms. The L-shaped hex rod has a round nylon ball on the end that fits into the mounting unit and is tightened with a lever-style screw, which allows great flexibility in positioning. I was able to put the rack toms very close together (I could actually make them touch) as well as several inches apart. The main tube that holds the tommount unit does extend into the bass drum, and is held in place with a single wing screw. There is a slotted memory collar for this tube, as well as memory collars for the hex rods that the toms slide onto. Once you have adjusted the tom positioning to your liking, set-up and tear-down is quick and consistent.

The toms were fitted with Mapex Headliner batter heads and

clear, medium-weight bottom heads. The *Headliners* feature laminated black circles that have the effect of permanent *Zero Rings*. The heads are not quite as muted-sounding as are Remo *Pinstripes*. They give a full, round tone without an overabundance of overtones. All three toms sounded great, and I was able to get good sounds over a fairly wide tuning range, from low and thuddy to high and timbale-like.

The bass drum also had a *Headliner* batter head, with a black medium-weight front head that had a ten-inch hole. I got a quite functional sound from the drum with no muffling at all. It may have been a bit ring-y for some tastes, but in loud, unmiked situations it could work well. Of course, with that large hole in the front head, adding a pillow or blanket for a thuddier sound would be no problem.

The snare drum had a seamless chrome shell, with tubular lugs similar to those on the bass and toms (except that each one was held onto the drum by only one mount, which was positioned just above the center of the drum). The strainer was the horizontal-drop type, similar to some Tama strainers, and the snare unit itself contained sixteen spiral snares. There was one air vent, and the drum was fitted with a Mapex white-coated medium-weight batter head and medium-weight snare head.

Given the ongoing popularity of shallow snare drums, I was somewhat surprised to see a 6 1/2" snare drum supplied with this kit. But it was remarkably crisp for that deep a drum, and the snare response was good right to the very edge of the head. The drum had a full-bodied sound when played in the center, and rimshots cracked appropriately. Although at first glance the drum resembles some of those really awful snare drums that come with a lot of budget kits (due in large part to the three reinforcement beads around the center of the shell), be assured that this is a quality drum.

#### Hardware

The MP525 kit came equipped with Mapex 500 series hardware, which features double braced legs with large rubber feet on the stands, and lever-style screws instead of wing nuts. The hardware was all solid and durable without being overly heavy.

The hi-hat pedal featured a hinged footboard with a removable toe-stop and a sprung spur to prevent creeping. The action was direct-pull with a chain linkage, and there was a large, round collar for tension adjustment. At its loosest, the pedal had medium resistance; at its tightest, the resistance was fairly strong.

There was a major design flaw, however, with the hi-hat clutch. On most clutch assemblies, you mount the cymbal simply by unscrewing a single, threaded lock washer that ultimately sits underneath the bell of the cymbal. However, on the Mapex clutch that piece is permanently attached to the threaded collar. In order

to mount or un-mount the top hi-hat cymbal, you have to unscrew three different items: the top assembly (used to mount the clutch onto the hi-hat pull rod) and two threaded washers. The only possible advantage of such a design is that you don't have to worry about bottom washer unscrewing itself while you're playing, causing the cymbal to fall off the clutch. In over twenty years of playing, though, that has only happened to me a couple of times whereas I've mounted and removed a clutch from a cymbal literally thousands of times. Whoever designed the Mapex clutch should be sentenced to six month's hard labor as a drum roadie.

The chain-drive bass drum pedal also featured a hinged footplate, along with two sprung spurs. The design is based on the classic Camco/ Gretsch pedal, featuring a

single spring that is adjustable via a screw near the bottom of the pedal. The action ranged from fairly loose to fairly tight, but was smooth and quiet no matter what the amount of tension.

The kit came with one straight cymbal stand that had nylon collars and a standard ratchet-style tilter. Fully extended, the stand was nearly five feet tall.

#### **Additional Information**

A couple of years ago I reviewed a Mapex kit, and while I was impressed with the sound of the drums and the design of the hardware, I commented that there were some details that needed to be addressed, such as rims that didn't fit over standard Remo heads without wrinkling them, flaws in the finish, and logo badges that were glued on crooked. I am happy to report that none of those problems existed with this *Mars Pro* kit.

I should also point out that in addition to the *Mars Professional* series, there is also a *Mars* series that features 9-ply mahogany



shells with metallic covered finishes. These kits originally featured Pearl-style double-post tom mounts and clear batter heads on the toms and bass drum, but as of the July NAMM show, the regular *Mars* series drums are being shipped with the same tom holder as on the *Mars Pro* kit as well as with *Headliner* batter heads.

The *Mars Pro MP525* drumkit as reviewed above has a list price of \$1,250. There is also an *MP5X* kit that has the same drums, but comes with *300* series hardware, which is single-braced. It lists for \$1,150. Mapex drums are covered by a six-year warranty; hardware is covered by a two-year warranty.

I was very impressed with the relationship between quality and price on the *Mars Pro* kit. The drums sounded good right out of the box, the hardware was sturdy, and the overall quality would certainly qualify these drums for semi-pro gigs. Students or part-time players should give this kit careful consideration.

## Beyerdynamic M54 Clip-On Microphone

by Rick Van Horn

It takes a lot of time and trouble to place microphones around a drumkit, and the bigger the kit, the more trouble it is. Obviously, if you can do away with mic' *stands* in this process, a lot of the work is eliminated. If you can also make the mic' itself small and unobtrusive, the drummer is going to appreciate it all the more. And if you are both the drummer *and* the mic' technician—well, the benefits are obvious.

In the past few years, a number of companies have seen this situation and have offered small mic's designed to attach directly to the drums. The AKG 408 and 409, Ramsa's WM-S1, 2, and 5, and Shure's SM98 have all proven their effectiveness in this fashion. However, these are all condenser mic's requiring a battery-powered pre-amp or board-supplied phantom power in order to function. Beyerdynamic now offers the

M54, a miniature dynamic mic' that resembles its competition in size, but can plug directly into any mixing board without the need for extra power. This is a convenience in terms of extra gear (preamps) that need not be carried and/or extra sophistication in the sound board (phantom power) that need not be provided.

Convenience is also the goal of the M54's clip-on design. The mic' capsule is mounted at the end of a short mini-gooseneck, which is itself attached to a fairly good-sized spring clip. This clip allows the mic' to be attached to the rim of a drum. The point at which the gooseneck attaches features a ratchet, allowing the gooseneck to come off of the clip at various angles. The gooseneck itself affords additional flexibility in mic' positioning. Overall construction of the unit seemed excellent: The gooseneck was strong and durable, the mic' casing looked like it could withstand the odd stick blow, and the spring clip held to a drum rim firmly.

In terms of fidelity, I found that I liked the *M54* best when used on tom-toms. It provided plenty of attack, yet also projected a warm, round tone. On the snare drum, it didn't capture the crispness of the snare sound as much as some condenser mic's I've used, nor did it get quite as much of the total acoustic spectrum as an *SM57* dynamic mic' might have. However, a condenser would need the extra power I mentioned earlier, and an *SM57* would

require either a stand or a much larger clip-on method of mounting. The snare sound captured by the *M54* was respectable, if not optimum, and the gain in convenience over the other types of mic's might be a valid compromise. Owing to the small size of the mic' and the clip, I did not try the *M54* on my bass drum.

The only physical flaw I discovered with the *M54* was that the length and stiffness of the gooseneck made it difficult to position the mic' both low (just above the drumhead) and close to the rim. If the gooseneck were a bit shorter or more flexible and easier to rotate sideways, a wider range of practical mic' positions could be obtained. Aside from that, the *M54* is an extremely user-friendly dedicated drum microphone. It's priced at \$189. Beyerdynamic can be contacted at 56 Central Ave., Farmingdale, NY 11735, tel: (516) 293-3200, fax: (516) 293-3288.

## **PureCussion Bags**

by Rick Van Horn



PureCussion's hardware and cymbal bags are similar to many high-quality bags currently on the market. They're made of heavy-duty *Tolex*, they're fitted with webbed carrying handles and a shoulder strap, and they feature excellent construction throughout. What sets them apart from the competition is the way in which their zippers are installed.

Most hardware bags have their zippers right down the middle, in the manner of a briefcase. When you set the bag down on its bottom and open the zipper, the weight of the contents tends to pull the sides together and keep the bag closed—making it difficult to remove the items. PureCussion bags feature zippers along one edge, in the manner of a soft-sided suitcase. When you set one of these bags on its bottom and open the zipper, the top completely opens up, leaving the sides of the bag in place to contain the contents, but giving ready access to those contents. It sounds like a minor point, but it's a major convenience when it conies to loading and unloading the bags quickly and easily.

The range of sizes in which the bags are available is also a plus: The  $Gear\ Bag\ (30"\ long\ x\ 12"\ deep\ x\ 5"\ wide,$  with wood insert bottom, \$91) is small enough to hold drumsticks, the tops of boom arms, upper hi-hat sections and pull rods, and other small straight items handily. The *Stand Bag* (36" x 13" x 8", with insert, \$107) is great for tripod bottoms, hi-hats, and snare stands. The *Rack Bag* (45" x 12" x 8", \$145) securely holds rack components or larger stands. Purecussion also includes a high-quality 24" x 2 1/2" cymbal bag in their line at \$91. See your Purecussion dealer, or contact the company at 3611 Wooddale Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55416, (612) 927-2330.

# Protechtor Compact Accessory Case

by Rick Van Horn



For those situations where a hardware bag won't do, your next consideration must be a hard-shell case. Enter the Protechtor Compact Accessory Case, from XL Specialty Percussion. Part of an entire line of drum and hardware cases made of one-piece molded polyethylene, this case features rounded corners (no riveting or corner braces to snag), a telescoping

oversized lid (for expansion purposes) three separate sections, and snapping closures on the straps. The case itself measures 36" long x 16" wide by 12" deep, and is available with or without a pair of wheels. We used this case to transport all of the hardware for Dave Abbruzzese's set at *MD's* Festival Weekend '93, and it did the job admirably. (By the way, two other Festival drummers shipped their gear to the show in Protechtor cases, and the condition of those cases—in light of the miles they had traveled and the abuse they had taken over the years—was a testimonial to their quality.) XL Specialty Percussion offers a lifetime limited warranty against cracking, which says a lot about their confidence in their product.

"Compact" is a relative term when applied to our test model. The case itself is not light, owing to the thickness of the material, and when fully loaded it will be very heavy, due to the amount of hardware it can contain. I was glad we had the version with

wheels, and I'd certainly recommend it. This is not a case for the casual weekender; this is a heavy-duty road case for loading and moving a lot of gear in an efficient and secure manner. It lists for \$189, and is offered in black or royal blue, with several custom colors also available. Contact XL Specialty Percussion, 16335-5 Lima Road, Huntertown, IN 46748, (219) 637-5684 for more information.

# **Etymotic Research ER-4 Canal Phones**

by Rick Van Horn



If you want to provide yourself with hearing protection—and still have absolutely optimum monitor audibility—Etymotic Research's *ER-4 Canal Phones* are just the ticket. The *ER-4s* combine audiophile-quality earphones with soft plastic earplug-like inserts. The plugs effectively block out virtually all ambient stage noise, while the earphones transmit the monitor signal to your ears.

Obviously, you must have some method by which to control the volume of that monitor signal. You might be able to take a direct signal from the headphone-out jack of your mixing board. Or you might take an aux-out signal and run it through a headphone amp of your own. I run mine from the headphone jack of my Gallien-Krueger monitor amp, on which I blend my band's mix, my vocal mic' signal, and my drum mic' mix to suit my own personal taste.

The beauty of a system like this is that the reduction of stage volume to your ears allows you to correspondingly reduce the incoming monitor volume. Thus, you hear everything more clearly and comfortably, with much less risk to your hearing. The effectiveness of this system, of course, depends on your resisting the temptation to crank the monitor volume up in your earphones. *This must not happen!* Without ambient noise as a point of reference, you have no way of knowing how much volume is being pumped into your ears. The key is to keep the level as low as possible while still being able to hear what you need to hear. I've found that point, and I now enjoy the fact that I can hear my monitor signal beautifully all night long, and still leave the gig with little or no ringing in my ears.

*ER-4s* aren't cheap. They're high-tech, and are priced accordingly, at \$330 a set. But then, how much is your playing comfort *and your hearing* worth? Each unit is supplied with a 1/4" stereo phone plug adapter, four extra eartips, a shirt clip for securing the cord, a carrying pouch, a storage box, and some other goodies. Contact Etymotic Research, 61 Martin Lane, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007, (708) 228-0006.

## Abel S.T. Series Practice/Triggerable Cymbals

Rick Van Horn and Rich Watson



Abel *S. T.* Series practice/triggerable cymbals are made of polypropylene, a high-impact plastic. They're designed to substitute for your regular cymbals as rides, crashes, splashes, and hi-hats—giving you cymbal-like performance with substantially less volume. According to my tests, while they all serve this function, some do it better than others.

For example, when played as a ride, the 18" cymbal produced a

very audible click—much like playing on a linoleum countertop. While this sound was certainly softer than that of a real cymbal and probably wouldn't bother the neighbors, it would very likely drive anyone in closer proximity crazy. In addition, the mass of the plastic cymbal didn't provide enough resistance to the stick to afford any sort of natural rebound—which is important when trying to practice ride patterns.

The hi-hat cymbals worked well when played closed for straight rock rhythms, but the top hi-hat cymbal provided little or no stick rebound, so swing or funk patterns proved difficult to execute. And since there was no sustained cymbal sound, working out the timing of open-and-closed hi-hat beats was awkward.

The crash cymbals, on the other hand, performed remarkably well. They were similar enough in weight to real cymbals to provide authentic resistance to stick impact, yet produced very little sound when struck on their edges. They also seemed to be able to take a lot of abuse with no visible signs of damage.

If you're a hard player who doesn't require subtle stick responses from your cymbals, then any or all of the Abel practice cymbals would work well for you. If you do need some sound and rebound to effect hi-hat and ride patterns, then you might want to try other devices on the market that muffle your real hi-hat and ride cymbals. I'd still recommend the Abels for your crashes, though, because they are much quieter than are real crash cymbals muffled by those same devices.

Abel also recommends their cymbals for electronic triggering purposes. To check out this application, we used very small K&K pickups (on the theory that the lighter the pickup, the less interference with the vibration of the cymbal) and a *drumKAT* electronic interface.

The *S.T.s* required a fairly high gain setting on the trigger inputs to trigger at lower playing intensity, but this was well within the range of the *drumKAT*. They produced no peculiar signal characteristics, and no double-triggering. The larger-diameter cymbals provided a greater dynamic range than did the smaller ones. That is, they required more force to 'peak out' the trigger. The dynamic range of the 18" ride/crash was very good.

Placing the trigger on or near the underside of the cymbal bell produced the most even trigger response to playing anywhere on the cymbal. Placing it near the edge reduced the responsiveness to playing on the bell. Placing a trigger on the hi-hats obviously means that hitting the hi-hats will only trigger one sound.

Considering their potential as cymbal triggers, combined with their effectiveness as practice tools, the Abel *S.T.s* might be an excellent investment. And the best part of that fact is that they are also relatively inexpensive. The 10" splash costs \$12, the 14" hihat/crash costs \$16 (you'll need two for your hi-hats), the 16" crash costs \$18, and the 18" ride/crash costs \$20. All the models are available in either black or white. For more information, contact Abel Industries, P.O. Box 1724, Camarillo, CA 93011-1724, tel. (805) 987-8124, fax (805) 484-0701.

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### **New Pearl Products**



Pearl's new *Masters Series* drumkits feature 4-ply, 5mm-thick shells with 5mm glue rings. *Masters Custom (MMX)* shells are 100% maple; *Masters Studio (MBX)* are 100% birch. This new thin-shelled series combines with Pearl's 6-ply, 7.5mm-thick *MLX/BLX* series and 8-ply, 10mm-thick *CZX/SZX* series to offer a complete range of shell thicknesses and sound options.

The Masters Series features bridge-style split lugs that have minimal shell contact and allow maximum shell resonance. Toms are mounted via Pearl's IMS (Integrated Mounting System), which removes the tom brackets from the shells and suspends the toms to further enhance the resonance of the drums. Newly designed diecast claws and smaller T-handles are fitted to the bass drums. No mounting hardware or brackets are installed on the bass drums.

All *Masters Series* drums are available as components, allowing drummers to customize their own drumkit configurations. Color choices include black mist, white mist, and emerald mist (lacquer finishes that allow the wood grain to show through), along with piano black, sequoia red, and sheer blue opaque lacquers. *Masters Custom* drums are also available in liquid amber.

Also new from Pearl are the 955P single and 957TW double bass drum pedals. Both feature a double chain drive (said to keep

the footboard from twisting, resulting in better power transfer), silentaction toothless cams, uni-lock adjustment clamp (for infinite beater-angle



adjustment), oversized footboards with raised dots (for slip resistance), stabilizer plates, and non-creep spurs. The *957TW* also features an adjustable-length drive shaft and two straight-shaft beaters

positioned equidistant from the center of the strike zone (for an even sound). Pearl Corporation, 549 Metroplex Dr., Nashville, TN 37211, tel: (615) 833-4477, fax: (615) 833-6242.

### Toolbox DI



The *Toolbox DI*, from Third Coast Labs, is a single-rack-space unit incorporating a rack power conditioner with volt meter, front and rear rack lights, chromatic tuner, metronome, and two active direct boxes. These features make it applicable to drummers who use electronics and/or a self-mixing miking system.

The power conditioner features seven 115 volt AC outlets on the rear panel with EMI-RFI filtering, surge-spike protection, and a voltage meter. The seven outlets are protected by a 10-amp circuit breaker and are rotated 90° to accommodate several UL-approved transformers (wall warts). Two of the outlets feature a two-second delay for use with power amps to eliminate speaker "thump" when powering up. The two active direct boxes (also located on the rear panel) utilize discreet, studio-quality circuitry with ground lifts, line/speaker pads, and anti-thump protection upon powering up and down.

The digital metronome features a visual indicator, a mutable audio click (useful to create a click track for live or studio use), and a "tap" function that allows the user to directly enter tempos by tapping them in. This feature could be handy in rehearsals or to trigger other sound sources. For further specifications, contact **Third Coast Labs, P.O. Box 160614, Nashville, TN 37216, (615) 228-3765.** 

**Cac-Sac Leather Bags** 

Cac-Sac recently introduced their *Custom Cymbal Bags* and *Custom Stick Bags*. Both types of bags are hand-made in the USA from 100% quality leather by master craftsman Ed Caccavale. They feature double stitching, rivets for extra strength at stress points, carrying straps, and extended, "no-fail" *YKK* zippers. The stick bag has a large gusset-type pocket for accessories. The cymbal bag has a large, zippered outside pocket and a padded shoulder strap, along with a foam-padded/fabric-lined interior and reinforced bottom. Both items are available in custom colors and feature a lifetime warranty. Cac-Sac also offers custom bag designs and repairs.

According to Caccavale, "Part of the character and value of my bags comes from the unique natural markings on the leather, such as scars and brands. These individual 'life marks' enhance their beauty and integrity." For more information, call **Cac-Sac**, (914) 969-4661.

### **Grover Projection Plus Snare Drums**

Grover Pro Percussion has made some significant changes to its Projection Plus conceit snare drums. All drums now feature the Grover Snare Outrigger system, which brings each snare strand out past the edge of the shell. The system features a five-point snare-tensioning system, giving separate tension adjustments for horizontal and vertical snare tension. A new type of air vent is also offered on this model. The vent allows quick dispersion of airwave compression from within the shell, which Grover believes translates into immediate transient response. The Cam-Lever strainer and the lug casings have been redesigned and improved for enhanced functional integrity. Drums are available in 4 3/4 x 13, 5x14, and 6 1/2 x14 sizes. The 14"-diameter drums feature Grover's custom combination Silver/Bronze snares (seven silver strands, eight bronze strands). The 13" piccolo features 15-strand Grover Silver Lite snares. Grover Pro Percussion, 38 Montvale Ave., Suite G-25, Stoneham, MA 02180, (617) 438-4600.

## PureCussion RIMS On Ludwig Drums

PureCussion, Inc. now lists Ludwig Drums among the major drum companies offering RIMS as an optional mounting system on selected series of their drumkits. According to PureCussion

spokesman Kent Peterson, "The addition of the legendary Ludwig name is indeed an honor. We are pleased to be able to contribute to their sound. The RIMS suspension system is the perfect isolation medium for the super, beefy Ludwig hardware."

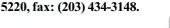
PureCussion, Inc., 3611 Wooddale Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55416, (612) 927-2330.

Neumann TLM 193 Microphone



Neumann USA recently announced the introduction of the *TLM 193* large-diaphragm cardioid condenser microphone. The mic' utilizes the classic capsule of the *U89i* and *TLM 170*, mated to the proven transformer-less FET 100 circuitry of the *KM 100* series. The *TLM 193* is especially recommended for both overhead and close miking of drums.

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LP206B

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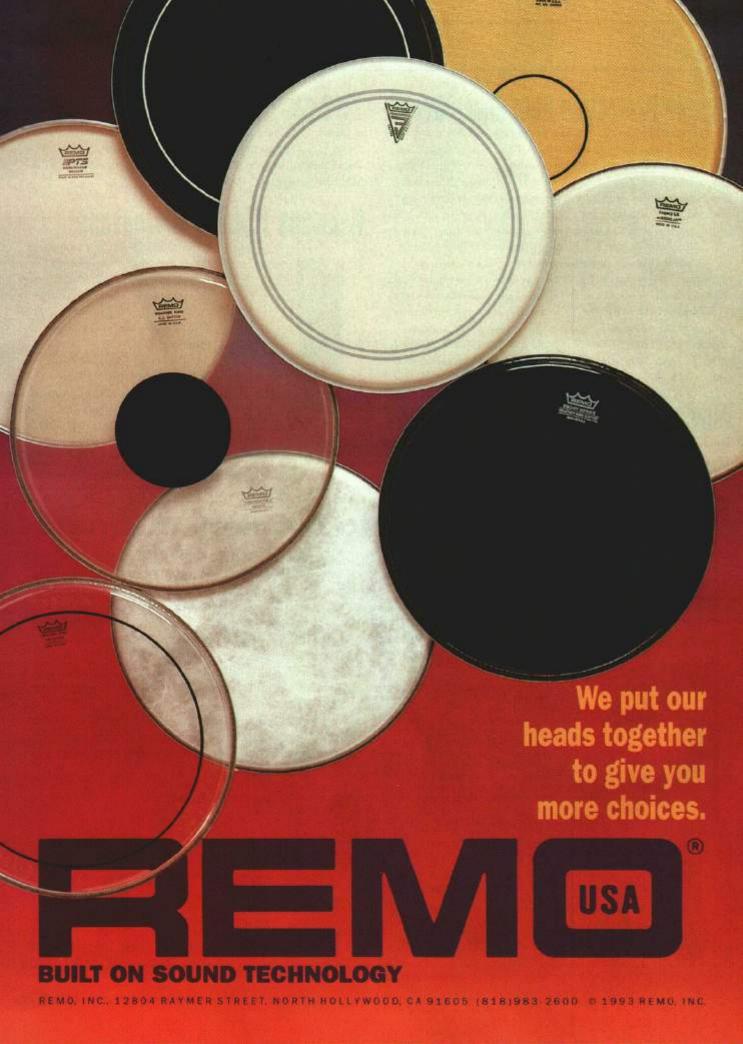
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LP570



#### **READERS' PLATFORM**

continued from page 6

The money situation is terrible.

At the school we are working for free—no charge for lessons. (Fortunately some of us have other jobs.) We are just trying to keep the flame alive! But we need help. We need little things to inspire us and keep us informed, and to give us the feeling that we are still part of the world. New drum books, audio and video cassettes, magazines, T-shirts, pencils, catalogs—these things would be so helpful to us. Even drumsticks, if possible. One pair is worth a monthly salary to us here!

For us, this is a matter of being alive mentally and musically. If you can help us, it will be a thing we will never forget. And when this madhouse is finished, we will try to set the record even. Anyone who can help, please do so.

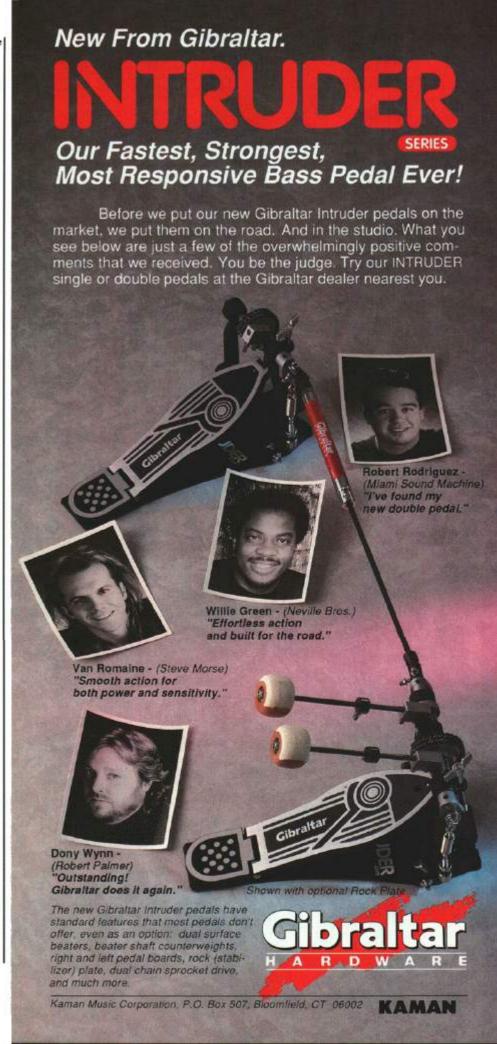
> Lazar Dzamic Catch The Rhythm Drum School 11300 Smederovo, Goricka 3 Yugoslavia

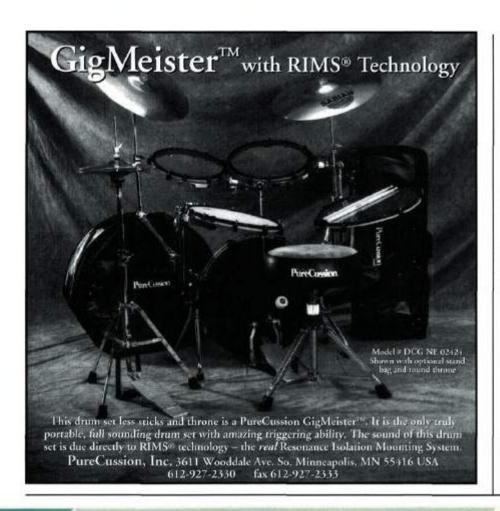
#### ...AND HELP PROVIDED

I am an infantryman on deployment in Somalia. I am also a drummer. When my unit moved from one place to another, I ended up losing my one pair of sticks. Since music stores are rather scarce in this part of the world, I wrote to Calato/Regal Tip to see if I could obtain another pair. As it turned out, they sent two pairs—and a practice pad. This was unexpected and greatly appreciated. I'm very grateful that the drum industry cares enough to keep sticks in drummers' hands—even in a place called Somalia.

PFC Peter Olson C Co, 1/22 Inf, 10th MTN DIV, (LI) Somalia







#### IT'S QUESTIONABLE

continued from page 16

lem. What you want to achieve is the optimum tension for both snares and head at which you get as close as possible to the sound you want, at the impact you want, without breaking the snare wires.

If you experiment with these variables and still cannot obtain satisfaction, you have yet more options: different snares. Rhythm Tech (511 Center Ave., Mamaroneck, NY 10543, [800] 726-2279) markets the Active Snare System, which is a set of coiled wire snares pre-tensioned and mounted in an aluminum frame. You might also want to consider a set of cable snares, such as are available from Grover Pro Percussion (38 Montvale Ave., G-25, Stoneham, MA 02180, tel: [617] 438-4600, fax: [617] 438-6611) or Patterson Custom Snares (4003 Willow Green, San Antonio, TX 78217). Be aware, however, that while cable snares are much stronger than wire, they also provide a different sound response, which you may or may not like. Additionally, they cannot be fitted to some models of snare drums. Contact the manufacturers to determine whether their snares will fit your particular drum.



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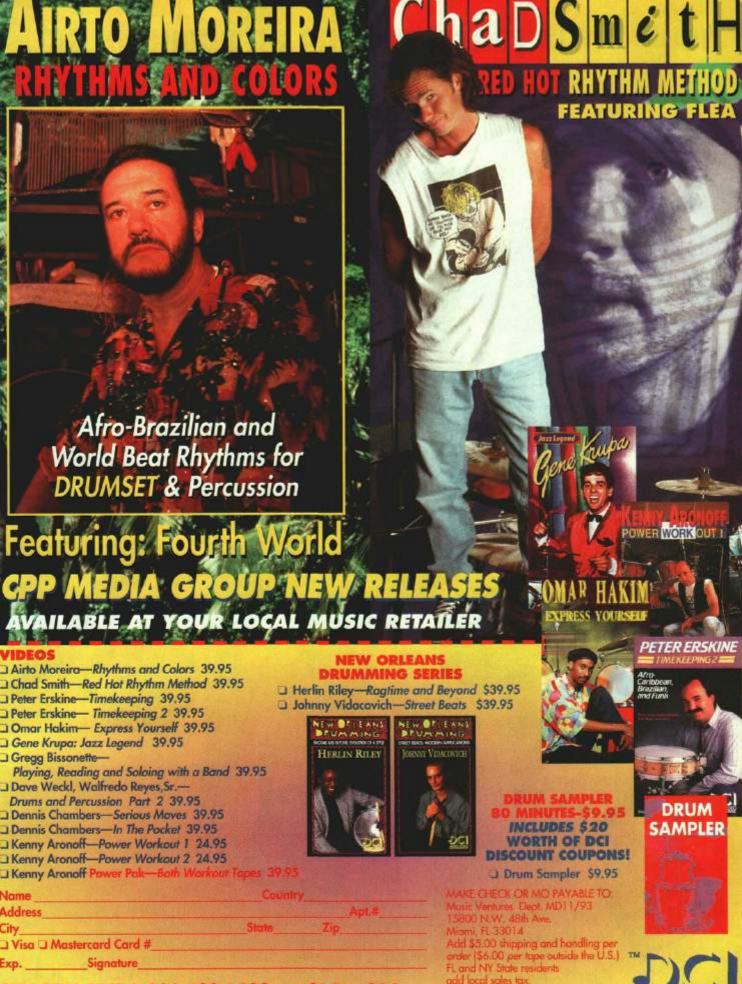


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#### continued from page 25

the cymbal-a valid consideration in a setup that contained a number of cymbals mounted at different heights.

"At the time we designed that stick," Erskine recalls, "I was trying to get greater clarity in my playing, and that consistency of sound in the stick was helping me achieve a more pinpoint type of accuracy in my drumming. But now I was in a situation where I needed to broaden the textural possibilities of each cymbal, and I found that if I used a more traditional teardropshaped bead, such as the Firth 7A, the sound could change as I angled the stick, depending on how much wood was coming in contact with the cymbal. You can get a more pinpointed sound by using the tip of the bead, or it can broaden out when you use the fatter section.

"This presented a bit of a crisis," Peter admits, "because a lot of times I wasn't using my signature model. So I called Vic and told him that I was using a different stick, and he said, 'You're maturing as a player. Your stick was delivering a very specific sound, but now you're searching for a different quality.'

"We don't want to cause too much confusion," Erskine says, "but we're working on a second design with a different tip. We don't want to abandon the original design because it's still valid, and I still use it for different situations. In fact, I've also been using the Buddy Rich signature stick for certain things. The fact that people use my stick really has nothing to do with my name being on it. You might originally be attracted to a signature stick because you're a fan of a certain player and it's part of the way he gets his sound. But ultimately the name is just an identifying factor, and people will only use it if it works for them."

Having met—and thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of using only two cymbals, Erskine has returned to a slightly larger setup. "I've added a third cymbal," he says. "It's usually a 16" or 18" K dark thin crash over on my right that I sometimes use as a ride. For recording, I'll break that rulenot that it's really a rule—and use various cymbals for different purposes.

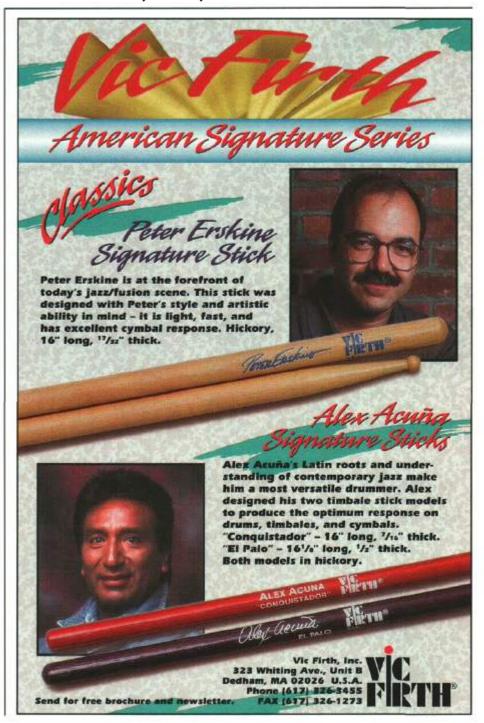
"I quoted Mel Lewis in my drum book a few years back, saying, 'Every cymbal I have is a ride. Every cymbal I have is also

a crash.' And Hugo Pinksterboer has a real militant quote from Tony Williams in The Cymbal Book: 'On cymbals it says "ride." Hey, man, that's a cymbal. You can use a cymbal any way you want.' That's a good point. If it's a good instrument, there are any number of ways you can play it.

"But it's ridiculous to look at the drum and cymbal setups that some people have, with an awful lot of stuff sitting there in front of them. There's a great temptation to play all that stuff if you've got it up there. It's like a kid in a candy store. If you've

got all kinds of crashes and splashes and Chinese cymbals, you can get easily distracted. Your playing will have a different kind of flow than if you are directing your energy at only a couple of cymbals in front of you."

Compare Erskine's recent recordings with those he made a few years back, and one does notice that the earlier ones were full of explosive cymbal punctuations, whereas now there seems to be more emphasis on feel and forward momentum than on color.



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"I know that my drumming has become more specific in terms of placement and ideas," Erskine responds. "I guess that's pretty accurate; the drumming functions more in terms of propelling the music along as opposed to crashing and accenting so much."

It's especially obvious on the aforementioned You Never Know, in which Erskine's playing is decidedly non-busy. He colors and shapes the music with a minimum of drum activity, relying primarily on a dancing ride cymbal to lead the music forward.

"As simple as my playing is getting on one hand," Peter says, "on the other hand I'm really enjoying getting into finer subdivisions—little five and seven groupings, and all sorts of two-three combinations within a 4/4 meter. By playing more simply, I feel like I'm opening myself up to much more stuff I can play. In other words, the ECM album was an extreme of playing very openly and not playing a whole lot. But it opened my ears to all sorts of things I can play, and now I know how I can play actively on the kit while staying very relaxed and centered and keeping the clarity. But when I was just recycling this very limited number of drum devices I hadwhich is what I hear a lot of drummers do—it just clouded up the music. You have to go to the extreme and go through a period without playing very much.

"My father called me up and said, 'You owe it to your fans to play a little more on your next record," Peter says, laughing. "And the next album will have more in the way of drum activity. But this was an album of trio music, and I'm real pleased with the balance between the amount of commenting and the amount of space. More than anything else, I think there's a great clarity to the recording. I'm delighted with the way it came out.

"One thing I wanted to do was make an album that didn't cause the listener to get up halfway through and turn it down because the volume suddenly jumped out of the speakers at you. In general, the volume level and texture of music has become so loud that it becomes a sort of wash. Anywhere you go in public there seems to be a musical soundtrack going, whether you ask for it or not. And with a lot of recordings or live groups, the starting point tends to be so loud that after a while your

ears become numb to a lot of the ideas that are being expressed by the musicians."

Sadly, Erskine's appreciation for the softer end of the dynamic spectrum has been influenced, in part, by ear damage.

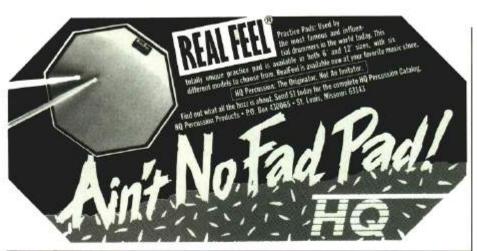
"Goodness knows my ears have borne the brunt of a lot of musical excess over the years," Erskine admits. "Finally, a couple of years ago, I was doing a tour with Gary Burton and Pat Metheny. We were in New York for a week, doing two and sometimes three shows a night. I had also booked a lot of recording projects, and was in the studio

recording eight to ten hours a day. Later, I was asking myself what I was trying to prove, and to whom?

"Anyway, my ears weren't getting any kind of rest, and at the end of the week in the recording studio I suddenly heard this loud, oscillating frequency. I thought it was coming through the headphones, so I ripped them off, but the sound didn't stop.

"I panicked," Peter says with controlled emotion, his voice betraying the fear he still feels when recalling the incident. "It finally stopped. Apparently, a muscle







attached to the eardrum went into a spasm. The body will do what it can to protect itself, and I had pushed everything over the edge.

"I came back from the tour, and a few days later I noticed that the ringing in my ears hadn't gone away. In the past, my ears would ring after a gig, and I'd think, 'Wow, we were really loud tonight,' and the next day it would be gone. But that's ear damage at work. I already knew that I was losing certain frequencies in my hearing, because I was going to an ear doctor. Back when I was in Maynard's band, they molded hearing-protection plugs for me, but I didn't like wearing them because I felt it was throwing my dynamics off. Playing that loud, I should have been wearing them all the time, but I wasn't.

"Anyway, the day I noticed that my ears were still ringing, a copy of *Modern Drummer* came in the mail, and it was the one with Rod Morgenstein's cover story where he dealt very candidly about how his ears had been damaged. I was very grateful that he talked about that, because when something like that happens to you, you are frightened, and it helps to hear someone else talking about it.

"So I went to a couple of different ear doctors, and they confirmed that I had tinnitus. It's a very distressing thing, because I'm a guy who likes quiet, and my life has been robbed of one of its pleasures. The sound never stops. The shame is that, in some respects, I'm more enthused about music now than I've ever been, and yet another part of me is saying, 'When can I take a break?' because I've noticed that if I give my ears a rest periodically, the symptoms are sometimes less severe.

"So now I try to practice whatever preventive maintenance I can. Seriously, you have to protect your hearing. If you don't want to go as far as molded plugs, which is what I use, then at least use those foam plugs that you can buy at any pharmacy. They can build amps that go to 11, but your ears can only go so far. I think we all have to be on a mission. I don't care if I sound like an old fart at this point, a lot of stuff is just too damn loud. Music is not meant to be listened to when it's that loud. You can't appreciate it.

"I love all the technological advances of the age of information, but I think a heavy price is being paid. Before there was elec-



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tricity, things quieted down when it got dark and people went to sleep. But now, everything is 24-hour, non-stop, in your face. MTV has created this quick-cut kind of mentality and expectation, and we have a very loud, noisy, offensive environment. People are being led to believe that they need constant input, but they don't. Constant input is wrong; there's no time for reflection. It just deadens people. And it messes up your hearing."

Erskine has come to realize that audiences respond positively to music that is played at a reasonable volume. "When I went on tour with my trio, I insisted that we do a couple of tunes very soft," he says. "You have to get the cooperation of the sound people, because otherwise, when you start playing soft, they'll turn everything up. 'Hey, you still don't get it. *Soft.* I don't *want* it loud. I want people to hear the instruments from the stage.' You have to get them to go along with you on faith that it's going to work.

"I could sense people leaning forward to listen, and then getting with it. We all realized that the audience was both hungry and grateful for that kind of dynamic shift—

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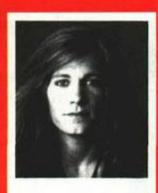
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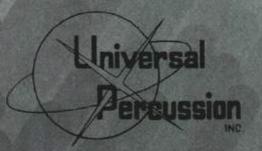
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2773 E.MIDLOTHIAN STRUTHERS, OHIO 44471 (216) 755-6423 FAX: (216) 755 6400 playing so quietly that it demands everyone's attention. And then when you increase the natural volume, it can be more effective. Palle Danielsson [bassist on *You Never Know*] told me he went to hear Ravi Shankar a few years ago, and when he got there he was dismayed because there was little or no PA system. He said at first you had to strain to hear them, but pretty soon you got acclimated to the volume level, and by the time the group reached their own *fortissimo*, it was hair-raising.

"On a similar note, I saw Jim Hall playing at a local jazz club here. He was doing this quiet guitar intro, but there were some loud talkers at a couple of the tables. Instead of turning up, though, he smiled this little rueful smile and I saw him turn *down*. People were still talking, so he turned down some more. Now he was playing *really soft*, and these people suddenly realized that they better shut up. He forced everyone to listen by getting softer, and it was brilliant.

"I'm going out with Steely Dan soon," Peter says, "and we'll be playing in some pretty large venues, so I imagine the volume will be more than what I've done lately. I'm going to wear molded ear monitors to prevent any further damage to my hearing. The system comes with an Aphex limiter to prevent any sound accidents, and it also means that I won't have monitor cabinets around me interfering with the drum sound."

Erskine will be using a slightly larger drumkit for the Steely Dan tour, in terms of both number and sizes of drums. He's also taking two ride cymbals and four crashes. "I was talking to Colin Schofield at Zildjian," Peter says, "and he pointed out to me that in big rooms like the ones Steely Dan will be playing, subtle differ-

ences between two cymbals won't reach out too far. If you want a difference to be perceived out front, you have to be playing with bigger differences on stage. Crash cymbals have to be bigger and there has to be a greater difference in size and tonal quality between cymbals. So I'll be using a standard 20" K ride as my primary ride, and an 18" K Custom with three rivets in it as my other ride. The first time I played that cymbal was on a jazz record date, and interestingly enough it sounded like a cymbal you might have heard Ed Thigpen play with Oscar Peterson. But I know it's going to work well in the Steely Dan situation because it has an airy but precise sound.

"Speaking of the sound of a cymbal, there are some interesting things in this book about the sound of music and why a Stradivarius violin sounds good," Peter says, picking up *A Natural History Of The Senses* again. "Here it is: 'Many violinists and violin makers insist that violins grow into their beautiful, throaty sound. A violin played exquisitely for a long time eventually contains the exquisite sounds within itself. Somehow the wood keeps track of the robust lyrical flights. In down-to-earth terms, certain vibrations made over and over for years, along with all the normal processes of aging, could make microscopic changes in the wood. We perceive those cellular changes as enriched tone. In poetic terms, the wood remembers.'

"I feel that way about my instruments," Peter says. "Like the way you play a cymbal and break it in. I think molecules do get used to working a certain way. I could be full of baloney on this, but I don't like my cymbals to be played by other people.

"I was talking to Joe Montineri about this. He's pretty opinion-

## It's Time to Put Your O





ated when it comes to drums, but he said he really liked my Yamaha maple drums. He said that in five years, when the maple really ages and settles, the drums are going to be that much greater.

"I have an amazing drum that he made. It's a 4x10 ultra soprano snare drum. I sometimes set it up between my small tom-tom and my hi-hat. A lot of drummers like having a second snare drum for rifle-shot effects, but this drum has a delicate articulation that's great for rolls, and I won't hit it hard. I use it for tonal variety and rhythmic interplay."

Considering Erskine's former enthusiasm for electronic drums, it seems strange that he won't be using them in the Steely Dan setting, given the limitations of miking in large venues. Just what is Peter's relationship with electronic drums these days? "We're distant friends," he laughs. "I never call, I don't write...I don't send faxes....

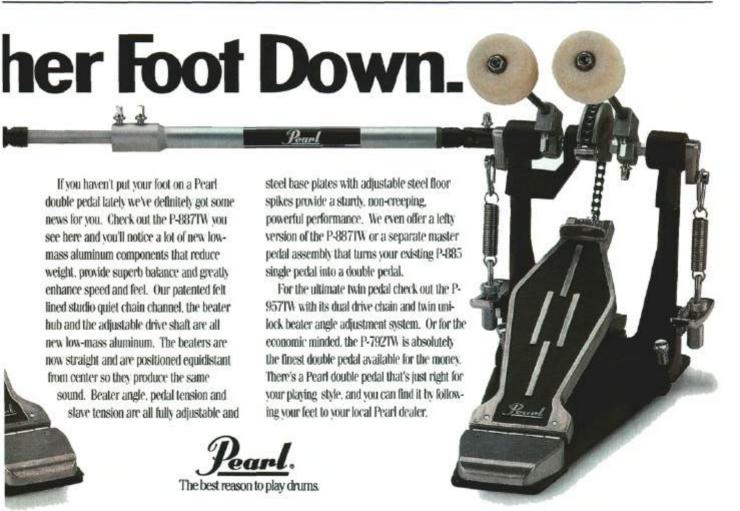
"When I do composing projects I'll still trigger sounds from a Yamaha *RY-30* using a *drumKAT* or a master keyboard, and I still like ddrums a lot. But as far as the Steely Dan tour, I realize that I could really beef up the drum sound if I were triggering, but that's not the idea. I want a simple setup that sounds great, so I'll just go with my Yamaha maple kit with the new *YESS* suspension system."

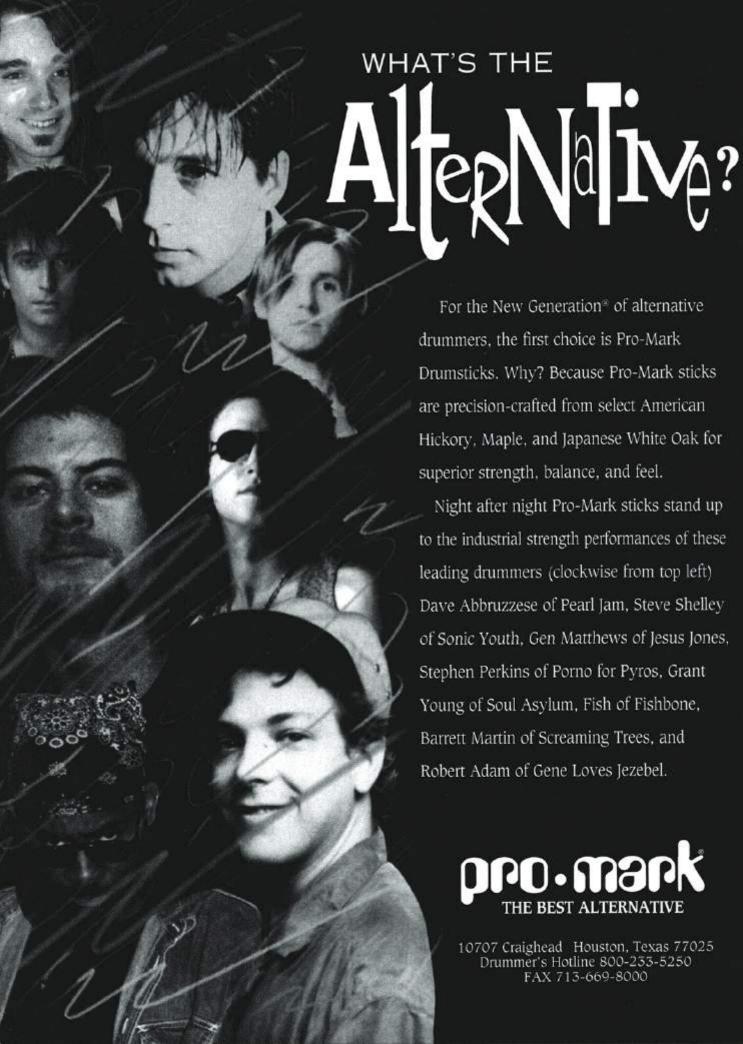
At the time of this interview, Erskine was preparing for the Steely Dan gig by practicing to the group's CDs. "It's neat playing along with a Bernard Purdie track, then with a Jeff Porcaro track, then a Rick Marotta track, and then a Gadd track, and noting the different placement of the backbeat," he says. "I'm really looking

forward to the experience, because there are a lot of different responsibilities between playing a jazz gig and playing a show like this, where you do so many songs in an evening. I've done some pop-oriented things before, but this is big-time. For all the different gigs I've done, I've never gotten the reaction from people like I get when I mention Steely Dan. It's one of those bands that people feel a connection with over the years. And for me, personally, in the late '70s the three hip things to listen to were Weather Report, Joni Mitchell, and Steely Dan—besides continually listening to Miles."

Despite the hearing protection, bigger drums, and louder volume required by bigger halls, Erskine has no plans to bash his way through the Steely Dan concerts. "I notice that when I start hitting the drums harder," he explains, "I feel less freedom than when I'm playing at a sonic level I'm comfortable with. It has to do with textural clarity. Right after I got called to do the gig, I got nervous for a second because I was flipping channels one day and I saw this rock concert where it looked like everything was really loud, and I hoped Steely Dan wouldn't be like that. But as I prepare for the gigs, the reference point I use is Jim Keltner, because he doesn't hit the drums that hard, but it sounds big. I've been listening a lot to the Little Village recording, and it's so cool. The music dances beautifully. Jim is an amazing drummer. It's like Dixieland rock drumming," Peter laughs. "Keltner is the Zutty Singleton of rock. So evoking this sonic image of Jim Keltner is kind of an energizing and comforting reference point for me."

Given the fact that Keltner began his career as a jazz drummer, it would seem logical that Erskine would hear something in





Keltner's time feel that he could relate to so well. "By the same token," Peter says, "I think Jeff Porcaro inherited a lot of his father Joe's jazz sensibility and emotion, and that comes through on the Steely Dan records Jeff played on. That's the really hip thing about Steely Dan; there are a lot of jazzy elements in their music.

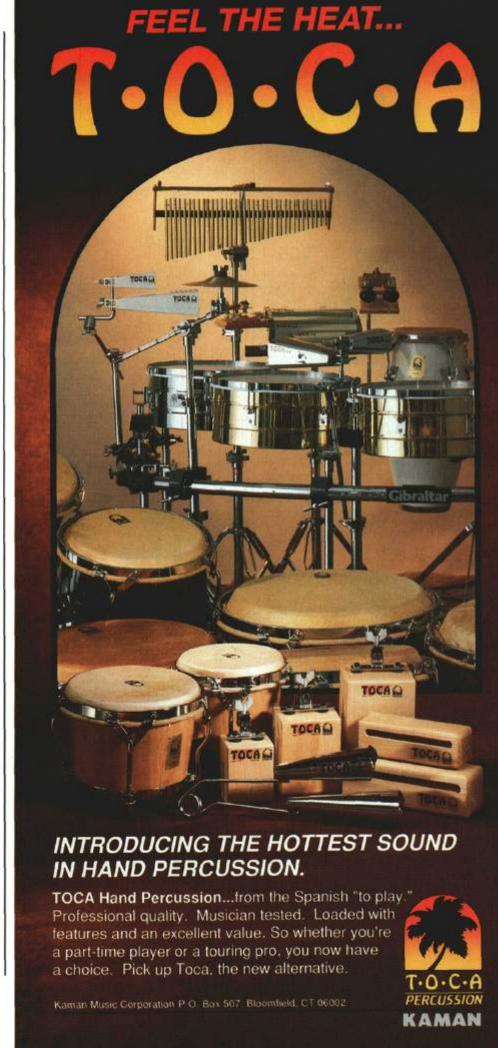
"And there can be great creativity within basic, simple beats," Erskine insists. "Creativity doesn't just come from constant variations in a very obvious manner. The great pop drummers are not trying to reinvent the beat every few bars. But they are being very creative through small, incremental changes. Jeff Porcaro explained this brilliantly in the video he made. It's the subtle wave he had going on his hi-hat when he was playing a beat. There's a world of variation just in the way he opened and closed the hi-hat, even though the basic beat remained pretty much the same. It gave his playing a certain roll that made his drumming a compelling listening experience."

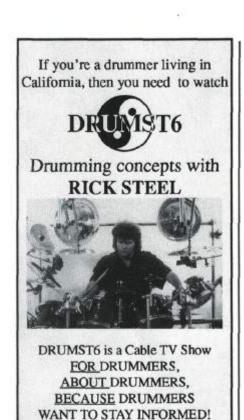
Erskine's description of Porcaro's playing could very well explain his own drumming on Gary Burton's new album, *We Can Try Love Again*. On "Our Love Is Here To Stay," Erskine maintains a steady, pop-like backbeat through the bulk of the tune. But listen closely to his hi-hat and you'll hear those subtle variations that give his playing an ebb and flow.

"I was digging playing very simply and not varying things too much," he says about the album. "When I was younger I felt the need to always leave a few fingerprints at the scene of the crime. But I can play a tune now and not feel that urge. Just the touch and the placement of the beat should reveal that it's me playing, and I don't otherwise feel that I have to call too much attention to it."

A similar attitude is evident on the Bob Mintzer Big Band album *Departure*, on which Peter plays four of the tracks. There are countless places where Erskine could have engaged in explosive punctuations and snazzy set-ups for horn figures, but by and large he doesn't, preferring instead to let the feel carry the performance without a lot of disruptive fills and crashes.

"Sometimes I wonder if I should play a little more," Peter considers, but then dismisses his concern. "Naw, I like the way it feels. Mintzer albums are fun because a lot





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of times I'm playing the tune for the first time. We'll run down sixteen bars to get the feel and then put it down on tape. I love that. Of course, you can always learn to play a piece of music better and better, but the first time you play something, there is a sense of freshness and discovery that is very revealing and honest. John Riley plays a lot with Bob's band in New York, and he sounds beautiful on the other tracks on the album. So I'm glad Bob lets me come in and play on a few tunes, because I still enjoy big band—especially when it's as good as Mintzer's band."

At the opposite end of the precision involved in the Mintzer Big Band is the looseness of the John Abercrombie Trio. Erskine, Abercrombie, and bassist Marc Johnson have played together so long that each is free to explore the music at will, trusting that it will all come out right in the end. On a soon-to-be-released recording by the trio along with saxophonist John Surman, there are times when the musicians seem to be playing *simultaneously* more than playing together, and yet there is a sense that they are connected.

"That's because we were not playing the music in box-like shapes," Peter explains. "We weren't worried about landing together on downbeats. It has a very free, kind of slippery feel, but it's not random. The velocities connect. It's like four rivers of mercury, occasionally joining together and then breaking apart. There is some very generous music making throughout that recording that's built on trust and a little bit of letting go."

One track features a Johnson bass solo that Erskine accompanies with classicalsounding figures that evoke images of percussion parts by Varese or Bartok. "If you think of making music in the kitchen," Erskine says, "Bartok is definitely there in the knife drawer, right next to Stravinsky and Varese. I love 'lonization' [Varese] and 'Sonata For Two Pianos And Percussion' [Bartok] and any number of Stravinsky pieces. I think that listening to composers such as Beethoven, Haydn, Bach, and Mozart gives you a greater understanding of musicality and form, but drumwise, there are going to be more obvious quotes from composers like Bartok and

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Varese than Mozart."

For all of the influences inherent in Erskine's drumming, it is remarkably free of predictable licks or generic beats and timekeeping patterns. Sometimes, it almost seems as if he is making it up from scratch as he goes along, and yet there is a deep sense that Peter's drumming is built solidly on tradition.

"My playing has changed in any number of ways over the past twenty years," he says. "Hopefully, what's happening whether it's big band or trio or free or not free is that I'm serving the music. I have as much ego as anybody, but I really do hold serving the music as the ideal. Because if I've approached something that way, I can listen to it for years afterwards and say, 'The music sounds good.'

"Back when I was first starting to make records with Weather Report, I would wonder if Steve Gadd ever heard them, but whenever I would run into him, he'd never say anything. Then one day he complimented me on my drumming on a Michel Colombier recording, on which I played very disciplined and relatively simple. It took a while for that to sink in, but it was very instructive because it wasn't the 'burning' kind of drum track that got his attention. He was already aware of the importance of playing to serve the music.

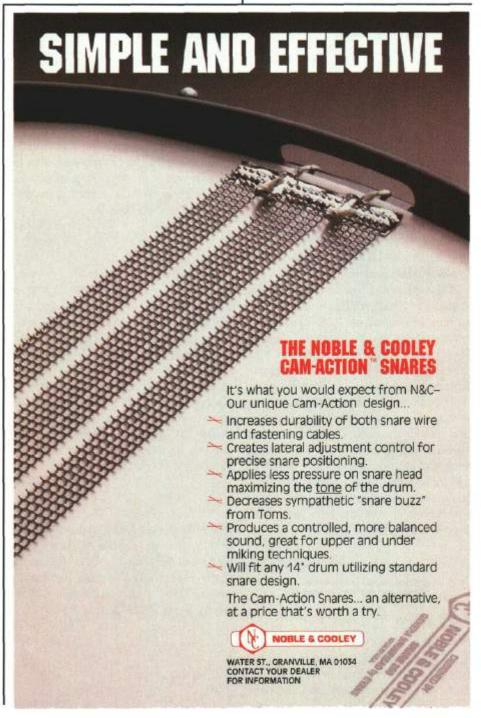
"So whether you play fast or slow or busy or not, if it's serving the music at hand, then it's right. And there is no real mystery as to what the drums should do. Happily, more and more, I don't have to wonder what to play. The music will always give you a clue if you open up to it.

"Obviously, drummers have to practice basic techniques so they're not sitting there at a complete loss as to how to hit the drums or how to execute particular rhythms. But practicing just reinforces the 'I,' and after you've developed coordination on the instrument and learned your beats, you have to let the sound of the music guide you and allow that to determine what you're actually going to play. You have to learn not to use your normal drum devices and avoid that kind of macho posturing you see in certain types of music, where players are just rapid-firing as many notes as possible. That kind of music isn't really about listening.

"Playing is the more assertive part of the

musical process—the masculine side of it, if you will. Listening is a more feminine trait, and would be regarded as the more passive musical experience. But we need to develop the female part of our musical psyche and learn to listen, because that's really the key to making music. When we truly learn to listen to what's going on around us, that's when we become better musicians."





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#### CATCHING THE GROOVE IN THE STUDIO

I was recently visiting my buddies at the Phoenix Drum Shop when a young customer asked for my autograph. As always, I was pleased to sign my name on his justpurchased MD. He then asked if he could talk with me for a minute. It seems that he had just finished his first L.A. studio job, which he described as "a disaster." He had been hired by a pretty well-known producer to overdub three tracks of music. His playing in the body of the song wasn't bad, but he just couldn't seem to get the hang of jumping in on the intro and grooving with the track-which had been laid down originally with a click. "Didn't the countoff tell you something about the groove?" I asked. With a stunned look on his face, he replied, "There was no countoff!"

If this happens to you, simply ask the engineer to "wildtrack" a countoff. While he runs the original music that you are to overdub, he uses another tape machine to record you clicking your sticks along in time to the music. When you feel that you have your click in the groove of the song, just speak your own countoff: "One... two...one, two, three, four." Now the engineer uses his trusty razor blade to take that countoff and attach it to the head of the song you are to overdub. This is an old trick, and some young engineers may not know about it. But it can save you many frustrated false starts and help you to feel good about your studio gigs.

Hal Blaine Canyon Country CA

#### EVEN PEDAL FEEL

It's hard to play even double bass drum rolls when one pedal has a quicker response than the other, or when one of your feet has more strength than the other. Adjusting the pedals to get them as identical in feel as possible can help, but it's tricky, and it still is subject to the ability level of each individual foot. So I've applied the same theory as rotating the tires on a car. Once a week I switch my pedals, putting the right one on the left and the left one on the right. This allows both of my feet to get used to the feels of both of the pedals, and ultimately serves to keep my playing even no matter which pedal is on which drum.

Chris Brown Santa Rosa CA

#### **GETTING A GRIP ON STICKS**

Since 1985 I've been using a plumber's pipe-cutting tool to put small grooves in the grip ends of my sticks to prevent them from slipping. It's easy, quick to accomplish, and very effective.

Drew Shourd Venice CA

I recently realized the advantages of using stick wraps. I purchased a pair in a local drum shop for \$2.99. Later, in a sporting goods store, I noticed tennis racquet handle wraps, in a variety of sizes and colors, and from "Super Dry" to "Extra Tacky" in feel. I paid \$4.00 for enough to wrap three pairs of drumsticks. It took some trimming to adapt the wraps to my sticks, but at half the price it was well worth it. I thought the "Super Dry" grips worked the best. Make sure you taper-cut both ends for each stick for a neater, less bulky finish.

Alex Alvarez Islandia NY

If you like "tacky" feeling drumsticks, rub a little Williams' 'Lectric Shave on your hands, and then onto the sticks. It leaves a tacky—but not gooey—surface that doesn't wash off. Don't pour it on the sticks; a little on your hands will do the job.

Marc Andes Brooklyn NY

#### **BIGGER BASS DRUM SOUND**

If you want a larger-than-life bottom-end sound out of your bass drum, line the inside of the shell with aluminum foil and tune the drum low. This will create a resonance that will make the drum go off like a cannon

David Thibodeau Waco TX

#### MIKING TOMS

Many drummers seek new and better ways to mike their toms. One good way is to cut a hole about 2" to 3" in diameter in the bottom head. Then experiment with different miking placement (just outside the hole, just at the hole, inside the drum through the hole, etc.). Advantages of this method include increased isolation between the mic's, and the fact that the mic's don't get in the way of your playing.

Jeff Masi Fredericksburg VA

#### IMPROVED SNARE PROJECTION

If you're tired of losing projection and high-end frequencies from your snare drum in acoustic situations due to the sound being projected downward and absorbed by your setup carpet, try these suggestions.

One idea is to put a piece of *Plexiglas* that is a little larger than the area of your snare stand legs (approximately 2' x 2') under the stand. It will reflect those high frequencies and help maximize projection. (If you'd like the same effect for your entire set and you don't mind the expense and/or cartage hassle, use a large sheet of *Plexiglas* and drill holes to secure the bass drum spurs.)

Another method is to create a snare-sound reflector. Use a ball-peen hammer to shape the center of a large metal pie pan into a parabolic "dish." Drill three equidistant holes around the outer edge. Run nylon cord through two adjoining holes to secure the dish to the two snare-stand basket arms nearest you, allowing enough cord for the dish to swing down freely. (Your

stand should be positioned so that the "Y" formed by the basket has its open end pointed directly toward you, and its "stem" pointing directly forward, away from you.) In the third hole (now at the bottom), attach an 18" piece of cord. This bottom cord will allow you to adjust the angle between the bottom head of the snare drum and the reflector—simply by varying how closely the bottom of the reflector is tied to the shaft of the snare stand. The greater the length of cord, the straighter the reflector will hang down from the drum; the shorter the cord, the more the reflector will be angled forward. By having this adjustable reflective capability, you can increase the snare projection and direct your sound when playing acoustically.

> Phillip Ferraro Watertown NY

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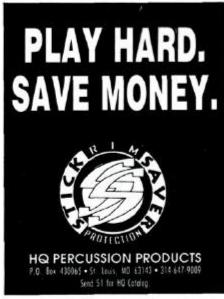
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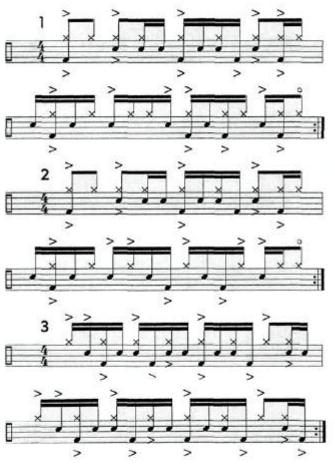
#### • by David Garibaldi



Here are two grooves (plus variations) that I put on the front of my Christmas card last year. They were inspired by a track called "King Of The Lobby," from The Return Of The Brecker Brothers (GRP GRD-9684). The grooves are in the hip-hop style, so you must

swing the 16ths. (If you play along with the track you'll hear the right feel.)

Remember to apply the two-sound-level concept to the hands: accented notes played about 8" to 12" from the playing surface, non-accented notes played about 1/2" from the playing surface. The snare drum is the loudest voice, then the bass drum, which is slightly lower in volume. The hi-hat should be more of a "transparent" sound that ties the bass and snare together. The unaccented snare and hi-hat notes should blend together so that the unaccented snare drum sounds like another hi-hat. (Exercise #5 is the only one that uses two hi-hats.)





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#### VIKKI FOXX

continued from page 29

ing anything outrageous to begin with. But Vince welcomed me right from the beginning. From what he's told me, he wanted me in from the start.

**MP:** How does the playing situation differ between bands?

VF: With Vince, we just went in and did demos, and they told me to play whatever I wanted. The songs aren't really complicated or anything like that, and they pretty much came right from the rehearsal room. Phil Soussan was playing bass at the time, but it didn't really work out with him in the studio, so I actually ended up recording all my tracks with no bass in my headphones—pretty much just Stevie [Stevens] on guitar. But the chemistry was unbelievable, and I can't believe the record sounds as great as it does for how quickly everything came together.

I did fourteen tracks in seven days, and I also had my manager's funeral to go to during two days of that, so it was kind of a tough time for me to record. What makes it really special to me is that I was allowed to play more in my style. I've always been a heavy drummer. Even though I love the Beatles and Enuff Z'Nuff, my style kind of came out of the Tommy Lee, Tommy Aldridge, and Terry Bozzio school. Enuff Z'Nuff was definitely a rock band, but I just get to open up more now, and this is kind of back to where I used to be. I'm happier now than I've ever been; it's like my dream band.

**MP:** Let's talk about where you used to be, before Enuff Z'Nuff. Were you always in rock bands while growing up in Chicago?

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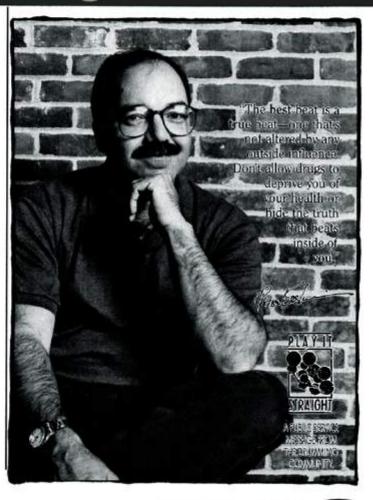
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VF: Totally. I'm like on everybody's demo tape in Chicago. I'm like the drum whore—I was in four bands at one time, and I never worked another job. Two of the bands were signed. I was in Life, Sex & Death and this other band called Diamond Rexx at the same time. I was also in a band called Lickety Split that had a spec deal on Elektra. We did the lingerie, chick thing, with big hair and pumps—when that was still cool, [laughs] This was all right before Enuff Z'Nuff.

**MP:** Were you banking on any one of these bands to strike gold for you?

VF: In this business, you kind of need a sixth sense. A lot of guys say they're going to stick with one band until the end, like if they put in five or six years it's gonna pay off. But you have to know after a couple of years whether or not it's going to happen. That's why I was in so many bands, jumping around from this one to that one. It kind of makes me seem like I'm a little cheesy. But I feel like I did the right thing, because look where I'm at. I don't think people around town cared too much, though. They just wanted to know how I managed to play in four bands, [laughs] There were conflicts—one band having a gig the same night as another—but I'd choose which show to do and the other band I'd say goodbye to. But I got through it.

At about that time, my cousin, who used to be my drum tech, had been working with Enuff Z'Nuff. I'd heard of them, and my cousin would always show Chip [Z'Nuff] my picture and tell him



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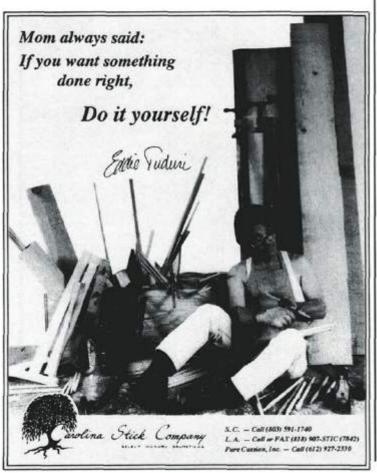
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I was this great drummer. I had this big black haircut, and Chip would just say he didn't need any Nikki Sixx-looking guy in the band. This went on for three or four years. But one day, the band was about to break up and my cousin was like, "No way am I about to let that happen." So he came to my house, got me out of bed, and drove me over to Chip's. I had a tape of some demo stuff I had from this band I was in called Fay Ray. He asked me who told me to play what I was playing, and I said nobody, it was all me. So he asked me to play in the band. I was still playing in four other bands, but I learned all their songs before I even played with them. I set up my cans and played with them, and that was it. We got our deal about a year and a half later.

MP: When you were playing in all these bands, were you going by Vic Cerny or Vikki Foxx?

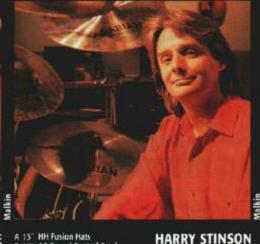
VF: Nah, man, I had so many different names. One was Vic Vikkers...! was in a Pro-Mark drumstick ad in Modern Drummer a long time ago under that name; I still have that ad hanging on my wall. I was also Vikki Black, when I had this big black hair. Then I was called "Spit" when I was in this punk band. Vikki Foxx took hold when I was in Lickety Split. I did that at first because I liked how the name Nikki Sixx looked, with the two k's and two x's. I was going to change it back when I joined Enuff Z'Nuff, but the record company said it would be cool, that it would look good in mags like Teen Beat.

I've never really been tripped up by all the names, but the one thing that bugs me is that I want my dad to get a little recognition. His name is Vic Cerny, Sr., but he sees Vikki Foxx on the

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records—not that he's said anything about it. But he's one of the main reasons I got into music.

**MP:** So you went on with Enuff Z'Nuff. The band got a lot of critical praise but never really caught on like many people thought you would.

VF: We had MTV on our side for that first record, which helped a lot. We had that shocking look, but the music spoke for itself. But our record label, Atco, was on the verge of breaking up, and MTV wasn't really behind the second record. It was all political stuff. They say you have to be out at the right time and be in the right place—it just didn't happen. I did the *Animals* record, and it's a great record, but the band's writing was starting to be kind of forced. They felt they had to write a certain way, like trying to be more grungy, instead of just going straight from the heart.

**MP:** How did you first get into playing drums?

VF: My whole family has been into the show business thing. My dad's a bass player, and he made a couple of records a long time ago in a rock/show band. He played in all kinds of bands in the '50s and did a lot of gigs. That's how he met my morn, at one of his shows. Anyway, I kind of stunk on bass, but I was only four. I'd break his shit, so he bought an old Rogers *Holiday* champagne pinkish-silver sparkle drumkit from some girl who was going into the army. I didn't know how to set 'em up for about a year, but then after a while, my dad signed me up for some lessons. I did that for about a year before I gave them up. When you're a kid, you're into doing other things, like baseball and other stuff.

Another reason I gave up drum lessons was because I'd just

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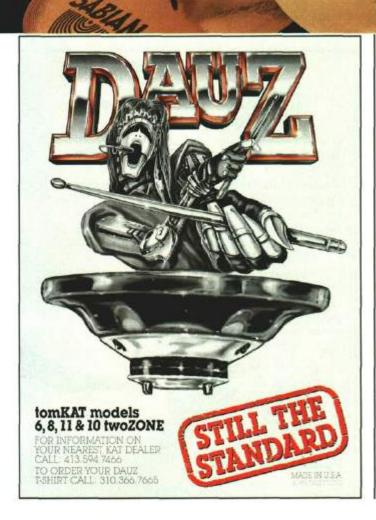
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been to grade-school tryouts to see what instruments we were going to play in band, and I remember picking up a trumpet. We had all kinds of instruments laying around the house because of my dad, and I knew how to blow into a trumpet. So I hit this note and the teacher said, "That's it, you're playing trumpet." I said, "No, I'm a drummer!" and I argued with him for two years—fifth and sixth grades—but I was stuck playing first-chair trumpet. I was so bummed. All my friends were back there playing drums, and I said I was just going to quit if I didn't get to play the drums. I got my way, because I was a little baby about it. So I played drums in seventh and eighth grade, and then I joined the high school jazz band, marching band, and even a drum corps.

**MP:** When did you start getting into garage bands?

VF: My first band was called Paragon Wade. I was nine years old, and these guys were all juniors and seniors in high school. They were trying out for some record-deal contest in *Creem* magazine. My cousin was the singer.

**MP:** Did you have rock 'n' roll stardom in your eyes even at that point?

VF: I wanted to be a baseball player and a rock star. I wanted to be a hockey player, too. I played a lot of sports, like football in high school. But at half time, I'd go into the band room and play the drums while I was still in uniform. I wanted to play sports, but I figured I was just too little, too thin. So I just kept playing drums. But it wasn't until Enuff Z'Nuff that I thought something big was going to really happen out of it. I knew I'd be doing something in music before that, but I was only nineteen when Enuff Z'Nuff got

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the record deal. Still, it seemed like a long time coming.

MP: When did you start taking your playing more seriously?

VF: It all happened during high school. I had this band teacher named Mr. Ivanelli, and he was very strict, but he always knew I had potential. I screwed around in class a lot, though—I'd come to class late, twirl my sticks, drop a stick or something like that. And he'd yell at me in front of the whole class: "If you drop another stick while I'm talking, it's detention for you." Well, I did a lot of detention, [laughs] But my teacher had a way of motivating me.

There was another drummer, Gregg Potter, who is my cousin. He was just a great drummer, and Mr. Ivanelli would always go, "Potter could play those rudiments faster than you. He kicks your ass on those rudiments!" So I'd go home and do my rudiments, matched grip and traditional, come back and play them both ways, and he'd be like, "Hmmm, okay...." But he always pulled that psychological stuff on me by using Potter. But he'd also make me play congas or something like that in jazz band and let this other guy play the kit on three or four songs out of five. But we had this competition, and I ended up winning a scholarship for two years to Columbia College in Chicago, just for what I played on congas and the two songs on drums. I ended up studying theory, and I learned a lot about music and other instruments. But to tell you the truth, I really just went to college to score chicks. That's just being honest. I went there to look cool and hang out. If I went to college now, I think I'd get a lot more out of it, just because I'm more mature.

Playing in bands, you rehearse the songs, but you don't really



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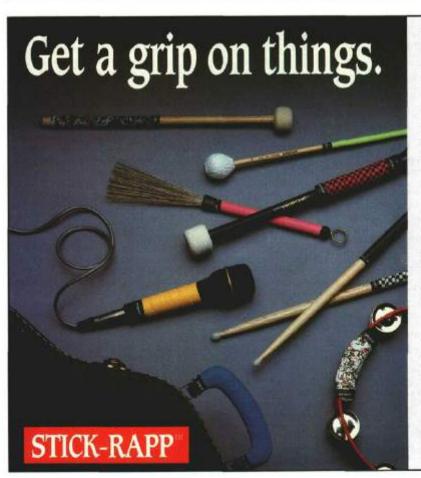
work on the technical end, and you stay stagnant as a player. Like with Enuff Z'Nuff, we gigged a lot, but I didn't really improve much. Enuff Z'Nuff would practice maybe once a month, no foolin'. And that was frustrating to me from a player's standpoint. With what I'm doing now with Vince's band, I get to practice every day.

MP: How did you develop your double-bass playing?

VF: It was all self-taught. I used to do stuff between my single bass and my floor tom to make it sound like a double bass. I learned a lot of that stuff from Ian Paice, but then I got the double-bass pedal and started relearning with two feet what I'd done between my foot and hand. But it was tough because I had a bad habit: I'd heard that you were supposed to start patterns with your left foot, but I'd always been starting with my right, so that confused me. And then when I'd do patterns like three on the hands and two on the feet, I'd only use my right foot. I'm just now learning to break it up by going right-left. Been Castronovo has been a big influence on me for that. But it feels weird to me because it feels like I'm not working hard enough, like I'm cheating.

**MP:** Your kit appears really hard to play, with a large kick drum and all your toms flat.

VF: Well, like I said, I used to get detentions in school, so I'd be sitting there in the band room, bored. I was the only kid in there, so I'd just take a big 28" marching band drum from the shelf and hook a pedal up to it. Then I'd take a chair and put a marching drum on it, some jazz band cymbals.... I'd just lay everything flat and I got used to playing that way. Every time I tried tilting the



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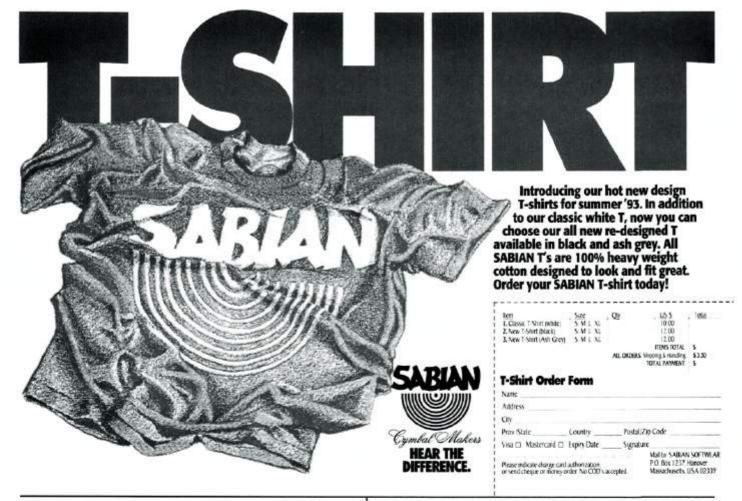
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drums toward me, it felt too awkward, like I had no power in my stroke because I couldn't complete the motion. That's why it's hard for me to sit in on jam nights, because everyone had their different sets and they were nothing like the way I set up my drums.

As far as my kick being huge, it definitely has its advantages and disadvantages. It's harder to kick fast notes, but I don't have much trouble with the sound because I've got both the front and back heads really loose. I don't have much padding, but the sound is still pretty dead. I've thought about going with two bass drums, but with two big ones, nobody would even see me.

**MP:** A lot of your setup looks like it has more of a flashy, showy purpose than a functional one, with the piggy-backed cymbals behind you and the same-sized toms on either side of you. And I've noticed you do a variety of stick twirls and flips. How important is showmanship to your playing?

VF: Well, I've spent a lot of time working on the "showy" part of my playing. I'd come home late at night, when it would be too late to actually play the drums, and turn on my stereo and just work on my moves. I had my influences, like Tommy Aldridge. I used to see him at an amusement park called "Old Chicago," when he was in Black Oak Arkansas, and I'd see him twirl and do all this incredible stuff. That's where I got my cymbal setup, with everything flat. I'd sit in front of the mirror and just work on twirls. The thing was, all the drummers I was really into weren't only great players, they were great showmen—guys like Aldridge, Tommy Lee, and Terry Bozzio. They always stood out in the bands they



were in. They had a look to them. You take a band like Aerosmith with Joey Kramer. I think they're great, but Joey isn't really an influence for me. He's a solid player, but I want to be solid *and* put on a show.

I have Bozzio's video, Solo Drums, and he looks showy without

even doing any twirls or things like that. It's funny about his tape, though. There's so much wicked stuff on there. My chick back home told me that if I could nail those ostinato patterns he plays, she'd buy me a Marley. Well, I had to go out and buy it myself, of course, [laughs]

I think I'm a pretty solid player on the 2-and-4 stuff, though, and my chops are cool. But the little twirls and stick tosses add something to it. When people buy a record, they want to hear good music. But when people pay to see a show, they want to see a show. And I don't think it hurts my playing to be spinning my sticks all the time. I twirl even during recording because it actually helps me keep my time and my feel. I don't twirl as much as I would during a show, but I still do it, without thinking about it. And my kit kind of serves both purposes, the playing and the showing. The cymbals behind me and everything real low—that's all obviously for looks. And I have the same-sized drums on both sides because I'm kind of ambidextrous, at least with my rolls. It's also for the looks, too. Instead of going around the cans to my right, I'll use my right hand on the drums to my right and my left hand on the drums on the other side. And I can do cross-overs, too. I just like having everything that's on my right on the left, too. It's something I added to my style about four years ago.

**MP:** Is that why you sit real low, too, because everything in front of you is low?

**VF:** I used to sit on a 12x15 case because I couldn't afford a throne. It wore down to the point where it got real comfortable. I've tried sitting higher and over the drums, but it just didn't feel comfortable.

**MP:** As far as *Exposed* goes, is there anything on the record you would say really shows your style?

**VF:** Probably one of the upbeat rockers, like "Set Me Free," because there's some jazz stuff in there. There's actually some jazzy things on a few of the songs; on some of the fills you can hear that influence come into play.

**MP:** You're playing a lot of Motley Crue songs on this tour. Do you try to stay true to what Tommy played, or do you add a lot of

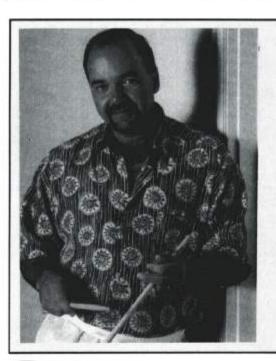




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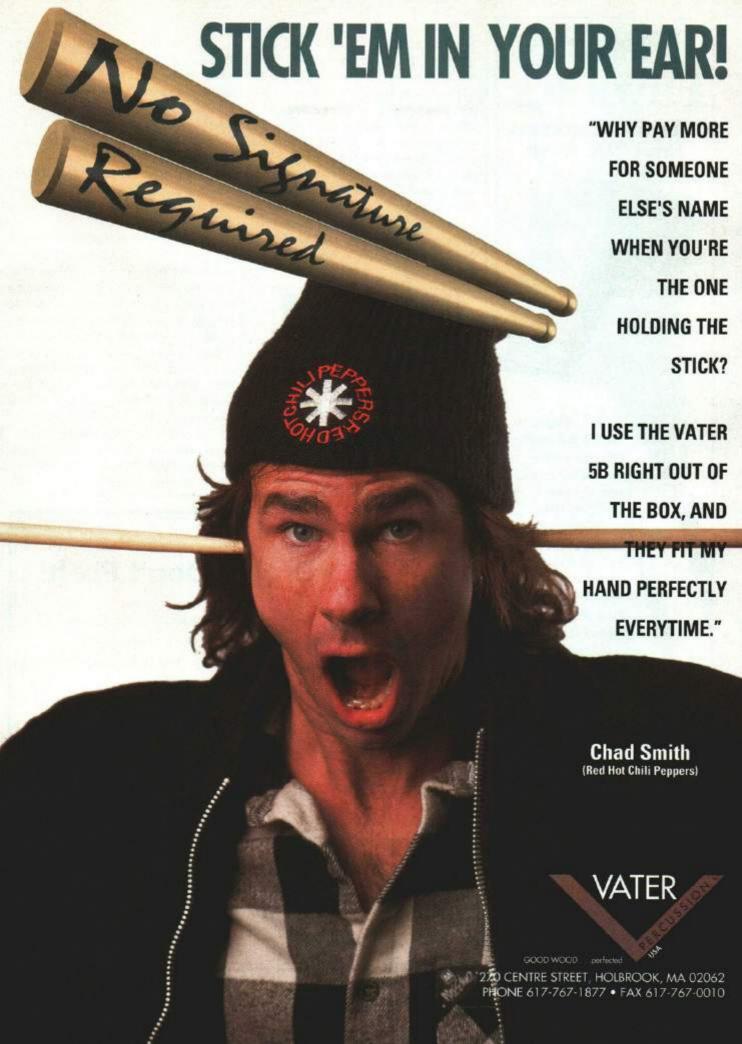
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your own stuff?

VF: Well, the first thing about it is I'm totally flattered to be playing songs he originally did. I take his basic thing and pretty much stick to it, because that's what kids are used to hearing. The stuff he did was incredible, so why would I think I could do it better? But I'm putting in a couple of different kick drum things, and we have some other accents here and there to make it our own. Actually, I think we're kickin' the shit outta Motley! [laughs] But really, this is definitely a different band than Motley Crue, maybe an extension of

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it. Even though I play a little bit like Tommy and Robbie plays a little bit like Nikki, it sounds different. Steve Stevens has a lot to do with that because he's an incredible guitar player, and he just lifts the whole vibe of the band.

MP: The album really took off quickly, and getting the Van Halen tour was a big deal. Do you feel like you've lucked out in the sense that you turned what could have been a bad situation for your career into a great one?

VF: It's funny, because there were times after that first Enuff Z'Nuff record when people were telling us we were going to be huge. But then it didn't happen, and that's why the Strength record came out so gloomy. We were all really down, and two of the other guys started hitting drugs really bad. I felt lost myself, and I wasn't even doing drugs. That's one of the reasons I think the band isn't doing as well as it should be. But I think I was born under a lucky star and that someone's looking out for me-at least that's what my father always tells me. I definitely feel like I was destined for something like this. I've always dreamed about it.

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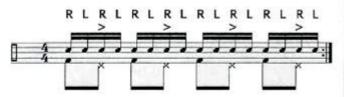
# **Variations On The Train Beat**

### • by Tom Van Schaik

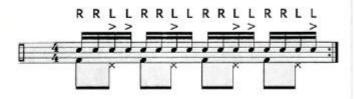


The train beat has been a part of country music for about as long as *drums* have been involved in country music. It's mainly used for very uptempo songs—usually in styles leaning towards bluegrass. The following variations deal mainly with Stickings, but as you will see, the slightest change in sticking can change the

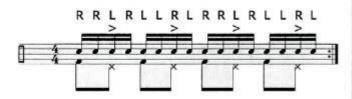
feel of the beat. Play the accents strong and keep all other strokes almost at a grace-note level. The basic beat looks like this:



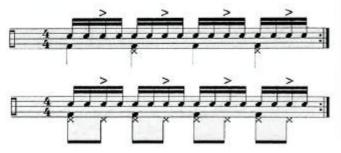
Let's change the sticking a little to get more of a Cajun feel. Pay close attention to the accents and the double strokes. (Remember to start out slowly and stay relaxed.)



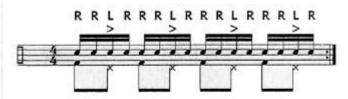
Now let's try a paradiddle sticking. This will change the feel a little, and it's also more interesting visually.



We can also change the hi-hat pattern around to give an underlying half-time feel. This is more effective with a tambourine placed on the hi-hat. The second example can be used to give more drive to the chorus of a song.



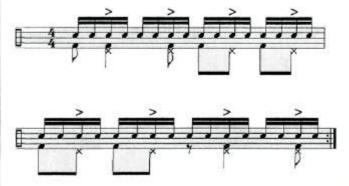
A more aggressive feel can be achieved with the following sticking



You can also play a half-time version of the train feel. Some recorded examples of this groove are "Tempted" and "Hey Baby" by Marty Stewart.

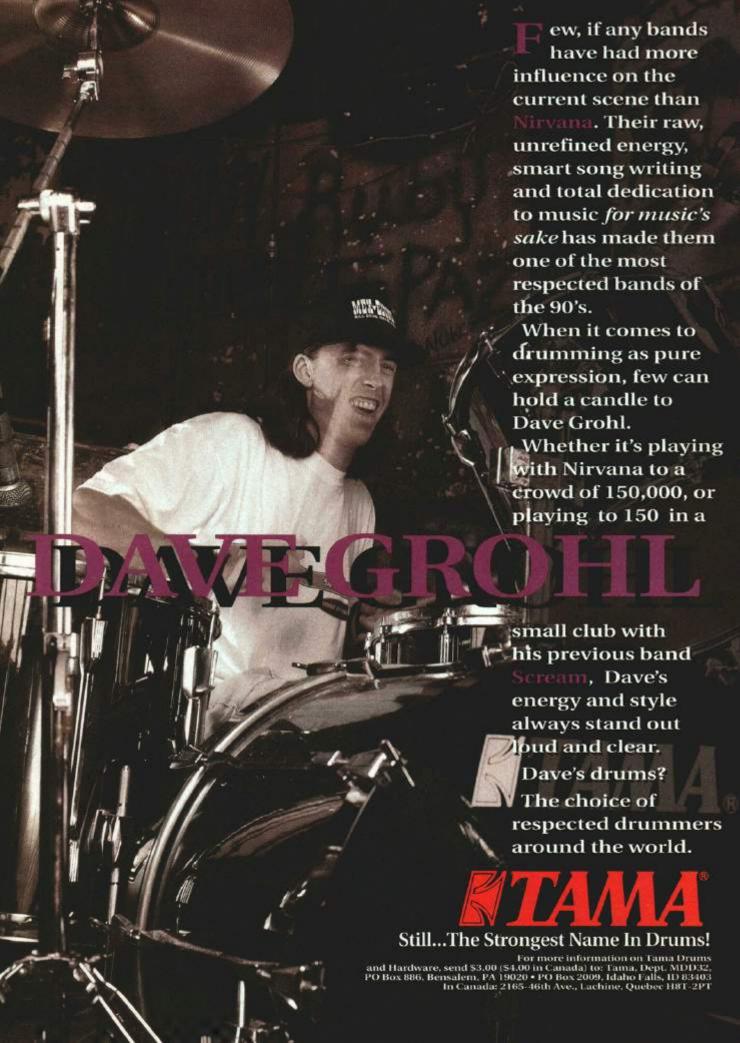


To come up with some good bass drum variations and coordination exercises, try playing the basic hand pattern while reading bass drum figures out of Ted Reed's *Syncopation* or Gary Chester's *New Breed*, The following example comes from exercise 1 of the Reed book.



Just like anything we play, when playing the train beat—or any variation—the feel is the most important thing. So stay relaxed and do some listening to past and present recordings to hear and understand the subtleties.





# **Double Bass Grooves: Part 2**

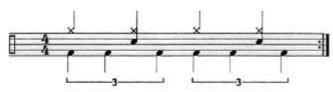


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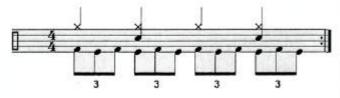


The most common triplet patterns played on double bass are the single-stroke roll and the steady shuffle, where the first and third notes of the triplet are played. In this article we'll get into some different grooves based on triplets. These grooves are taken from my book *Double Bass Drumming*. They are

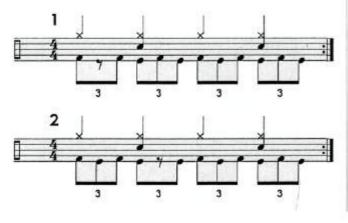
played using what I call the "Single Stroke System," where the bass drum rhythms are played as if they were part of an 8th-note triplet single-stroke roll. To begin with, check out the following pattern.

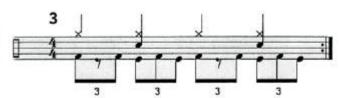


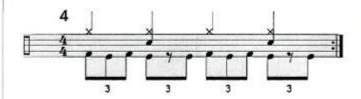
The bass drum is playing quarter-note triplets against a quarter-note ride. This creates a 6:4 polyrhythm between the right foot and right hand. Keep in mind that the two quarter-note triplets are six notes of equal duration. They are *evenly* spaced throughout the measure. This groove is important to master before moving on to play the grooves that follow. By playing in between BD1 and BD2, the 8th-note triplet roll is formed:

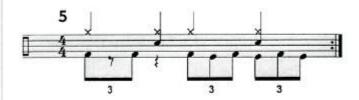


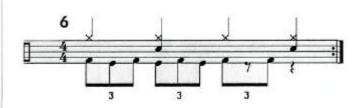
The grooves that follow are based on this pattern. The main bass drum (BD1) plays the notes of the quarter-note triplets, and the second bass drum (BD2) plays the in-between notes. The grooves are designed to give both feet an equal workout.

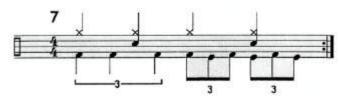










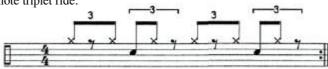


For anyone familiar with the *Time Odyssey* album I did with Vinnie Moore (Squawk/Polygram 834634-2), you'll hear example 8 in the tune "Into The Future." Notice that this groove is simply a combination of the above two. In the first half of the groove, the bass drums play 8th-note triplets, while in the second half, the left foot drops out, leaving the main bass drum playing a quarter-note

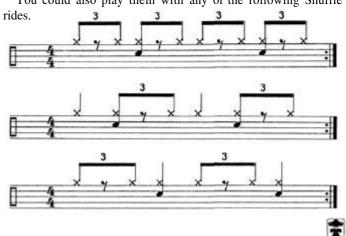
triplet on beats 3 and 4.



These grooves are written with a quarter-note ride and snare drum on beats 2 and 4. Another way to try them is with a quarternote triplet ride:



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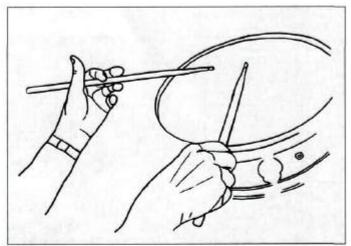
# **Cross-Sticking**

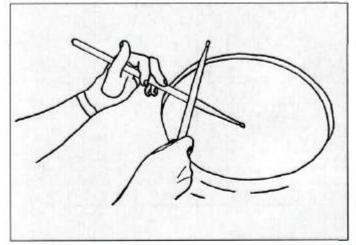
### • by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Marvin Burock

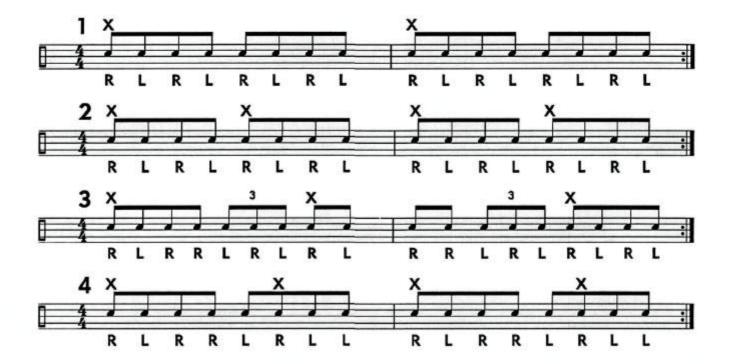


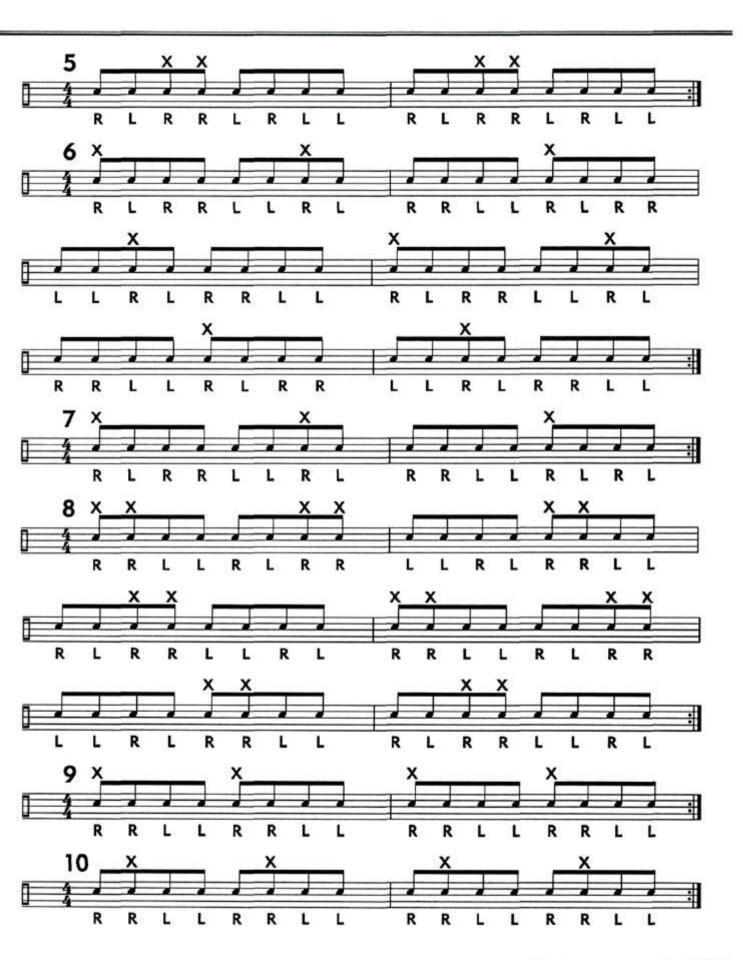
Our focus in this article is the art of cross-sticking. Not to be confused with cross-sticking around the *set*, this technique (sometimes referred to as "playing stickshots") involves the right stick striking the left while the left is held firmly against the drumhead. (See illustrations.) Although the technique is illustrated using traditional grip, matched grip works fine. Cross-sticking has been used very successfully by people like Jo Jones, Sidney Catlett, Roy Haynes, Gene Krupa, and Buddy Rich. With cross-sticking, a drummer can achieve a sound entirely different from the regular rimshot.

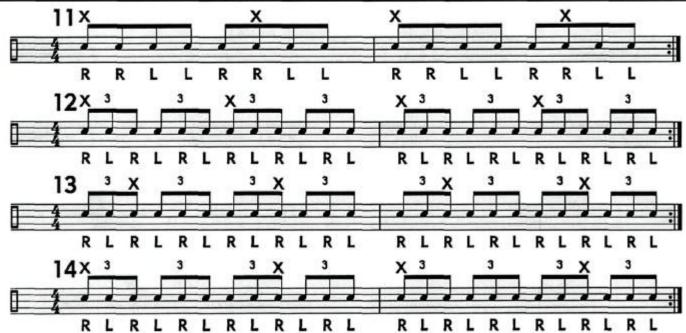




The following exercises can be used to master this technique. The "x" indicates where the right stick strikes the left.







You can experiment and get different sounds by changing the angle of the left stick or the area where the left stick is struck (on the shoulder or towards the tip). Also, a different sound can be achieved by varying the location on the drum where the cross-stick is played (in the center or towards the edge).

These exercises are designed just to give you basic ideas. Once you've mastered them, be creative and do your own thing. Cross-sticking can be an important part of a drummer's vocabulary and is worthy of your practice.



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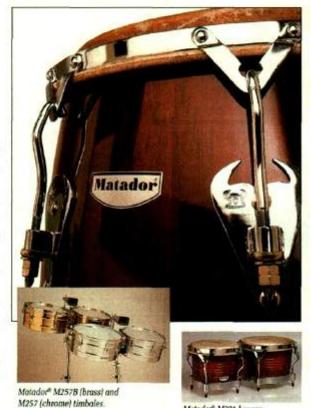
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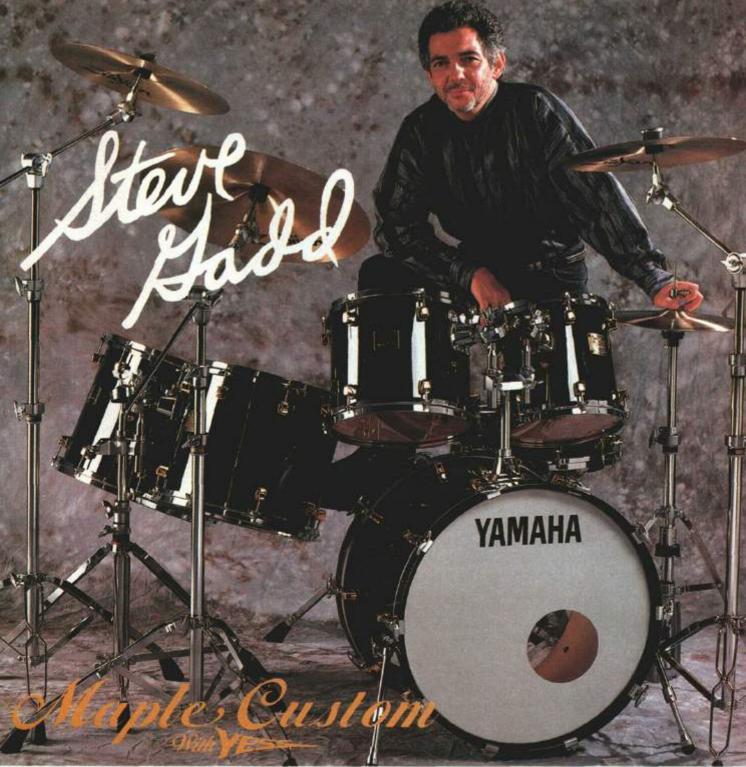
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### RECORDINGS

### JOE MORELLO

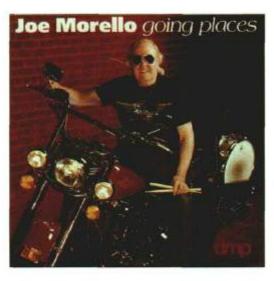
Going Places (DMP CD-497)

Joe Morello: dr Greg Kogan: pno Ralph Lalama: sx, fl Gary Mazzaroppi: bs

Sweet Georgia Brown; Parisian Thoroughfare; Secret Love; Skylark; Topsy; Mission Impossible Theme; I Should Care; Calypso Joe; Autumn Leaves; Sweet & Lovely

This new disc from Joe Morello is like a visit from an old friend you haven't heard from in a while. There is a comfortable familiarity in the way he tells his musical stories mixed with the enjoyment of his ventures into new locales. From the opening drum licks of "Sweet Georgia Brown" one recognizes the touch, the technique, the taste that

secured Morello's place in drum history as one of the true greats. And there's plenty of drumming to enjoy on this album, including Morello's rendition of Cozy Cole's famous drum feature "Topsy" and a 5/4 solo workout on the "Mission Impossible Theme." But while the idea of a 5/4 solo might sound like Morello is merely trying to recapture the past glory of his solo in Dave Brubeck's



recording of "Take Five," be assured that this solo is quite different. Rather than playing over a rhythm section vamp that lets him play spaciously and over-the-bar, as with "Take Five," here Morello goes it alone, maintaining the rhythmic pulse himself while superimposing melodic phrases over it.

But it's not just an album of drum solos by any means. Morello also demonstrates his considerable talent in swinging a combo with just a ride cymbal or a pair of brushes, playing infectious Latin grooves with muted drums and cross-stick effects, coloring a ballad with mallets or brushes, and generally bringing out the many colors of the

drumset.

In many ways this is exactly the album one familiar with Morello would expect from him. But it's played with such energy and spirit that one has to wonder why the hell there wasn't a new Morello album long before this. It's about time. (Pun intended.)

• Rick Mattingly

### **PJ HARVEY** Rid Of Me

(Island 314-514 696 2)



Polly Jean Harvey: gtr, vcl, cello, vln, org Robert Ellis: dr, perc, vcl Steve Vaughan: bs Rid Of Me; Missed; Legs; Rub 'Til It Bleeds; Hook; Man-Size Sextet;

Highway '61 Revisited; 50ft Queenie; Yuri-G; Man-Size; Dry; Me-Jane; Snake; Ecstasy

On old blues records the artists would often arrange bars to fit their internal clocks, dropping or adding beats as they felt fit. Using a revamped yet similar approach, Polly Jean Harvey moans, groans, and drives her band through a cathartic purging, pumping out sweat-drenched blues-punk through limber odd meters and jagged, mind-tricking crossrhythms.

Topping year-end polls for '92's *Dry*, this English trio's follow-up delves even deeper into the psyche of sensual frustration and longing. Each song

is a gorging looking for release. This is timeless rock 'n' roll, dangerous as early Little Richard, primal like the Meters. powerful like Howlin' Wolf.

With their feminine viewpoint and fondness for odd meters, PJ Harvey's closest kin would be Chrissie Hynde's Pretenders, but they're more gut-wrenching and less poppy than that '80s act (who also drew upon the punk explosion). The trio is remarkably organic, weaving their parts together like a polyrhythmic quilt. Taking his cue from Polly Jean's nudging guitar lines, Robert Ellis injects his clever drumming with unusual creativity, displacing, tilting, and implying rhythms

over an already skewed framework. The band often sounds ready to fall apart, only to come crashing through on some unison riff. Ellis plays the snare drum in 2 over 3 fashion over an 11/8 time feel on "Man-Size," lays down a bouncy tom rhythm while accenting the bass drum on the "&"s on "Yuri-G," making it an off-kilter 6/8 romp, and slugs through the shifting paces of "50ft Queenie." The slow 5/4 of "Hook," the hemiolas of 3 and 5 in "Missed," and the constant toying with bars of 3 and 6 make for an unusual playing field. PJ Harvey meets the challenge, invigorating today's rock in the process.

• Ken Micallef

### LESTER BOWIE/ PHILLIP WILSON

Duet

(IAI123854-2)



### Lester Bowie: trp Phillip Wilson: dr, perc

Duet; Tbm; Finale

Drumming is deep in the blood of St. Louis-bred Phillip Wilson, whose grandfather played drums on riverboats and who, beginning at age ten, logged seven years in drum corps (the last three as a teacher) and began gigging at sixteen. His open mind is shown in a broad range of big-name jazz, blues, rock, studio, television, and work.

Wilson's relationship with Lester Bowie goes back to high school, and, as shown on this 1978 recording (produced by Paul Bley), the two are vividly sensitive to each other's internal rhythms and moods. You probably know Bowie as the entertaining Dizzy Gillespie of free jazz, holding forth with mischievous grin and Confucian beard and white lab coat and more sounds from the trumpet than Vincent Bach ever dreamed possible, spanning musical history from Spain to Satchmo and bebop to doo-wop in less time than it takes most players to assemble the horn. And he's up to all his remarkable tricks here (though he seems to forgo the old Perrier

valve job this time). But Wilson not only matches him color for color (using luxuriant brushwork, talking-drum techniques, varied mallets, wood sounds, gongs, and bells) but also grounds the music in dark dignitv and warm natural un-metered swing.

At under 31 minutes, this album is a wistful look back at a time when jazz musicians still improvised and their records were long enough. (Sphere Marketing, Cargo Bldg 80, Rm 2A, JFKAirport, Jamaica, NY 11430, [718] 656-6220)

• Hal Howland

### VARIOUS ARTISTS Jim Payne's New York Funk! Voll

(Gramavision 79489)



Jim Payne, Mike Clark, Ronnie Burrage, Clyde Stubblefield: dr Kenny Davis, Mark Helias, Lonnie Plaxico, Anthony Jackson: bs Allan Jaffe, David Fieczynski, Jon Sholle: gtr Steve Gaboury, Jeff Pittson, Marc Puricelli: kybd Fred Wesley, Steve Swell: tbn Jack Walrath, John Mulkerin: trp Kenny Garrett, Steve Elson, Ellery Eskelin, Craig Handy, Pee Wee Ellis: sx Streets Of New York; She's A Reptile; The Bathtub Club: Love Letters: Bone Dance; The Talking Chicken; Off The Walrath; Waiting For You; The Bottom Line; Planet X; Far From Home; Last Chance

For a serious lesson in The Groove with some James Brown roots, look no further than this release put together by drummer Jim Payne. Payne, bassist Mark Helias, and the rest of House Of Payne (several former Slickaphonics) blister on some great sloppy funk on "The Bathtub Club," and rock the joint down on "Planet X." Payne earns his stars making the funk sound smooth and aggressive, and brings in three other groups to burn.

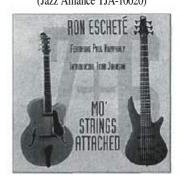
Mike Clark hasn't been flaunting his legendary funk chops much recently—pursuing a straight-ahead course instead—until a recent reunion with Paul Jackson and the four tracks his band is featured on here. Clark has lost none of his syncopation, as "Off The Walrath" shows. It's a blistering tune that makes you scratch your head. All children should be exposed to this funk at an early age. The combination of Clark and Lonnie Plaxico on bass really works—they seem to push each other to the edge. And Jack Walrath screams in his usual articulate way.

Ronnie "Righteous" Burrage kicks out the funk with taste and power in trombonist Fred Wesley's band. Witness his crisp stickwork on "Streets Of New York" as Kenny Garrett blows fiercely and guitarist Jaffe adds a metal edge, or his agile hi-hat work on the nononsense "Last Chance."

The only disappointment on New York Funk! is that there aren't more tracks from Pee Wee Ellis's group, featuring former James Brown drummer Clyde Stubblefield with bassist Anthony Jackson. Now that's a rhythm section with a lot of fortified funk potential.

• Robin Tolleson

### **RON ESCHETE** Mo' Strings Attached (Jazz Alliance TJA-10020)



### Ron Eschete: gtr Todd Johnson: bs Paul Humphrey: dr

East Of The Sun; I Can't Get Started; Willow Weep For Me; Street Of Dreams; Blues Bruise; Haunted Heart; Cascade Of The Seven Waterfalls; I'm Walkin'; Love Dance; F.S.R.; To Say Goodbye

Louisiana-born guitarist Ron Eschete is one of those absolutely first-rate musicians whose early decision to give family equal billing with music postponed what today would surely be world recognition. Chops, taste, interesting voicings and arrangements...the guy does it all, and here he proves it. His seven-string guitar combines with Todd Johnson's six-string bass to produce a rich tapestry of melody, harmony, and teamwork.

Jazz, pop, and studio veteran Paul Humphrey calmly demonstrates the art of being in the right place at the right time. With an understated 3/4 bossa feel, tight 8ths on the hi-hat, and beautifully modulated sizzle cymbals, he calls attention only to the thing that matters; the

music. His airtight stops and brief tasty solos on "Bruise," clean fours on "Walkin" (Fats Domino would be out of breath trying to keep up with this version), and luxuriant brushwork on "F.S.R." embody the essence of ensemble drumming. His solo ideas are firmly in the Roach-Haynes tradition: suave and statesman-like, marked by an ever-present left foot. Lovely. (The Jazz Alliance, P.O. Box 515. Concord. CA 94522)

• Hal Howland

### **VIDEO**

### **HENRY ADLER**

Hand Development Technique

CPP Media/Belwin

15800 N.W. 48th Ave.

Miami FL 33014

Price: \$39.95 (VBS)

When trying to learn a technique, it's obviously very instructive to observe someone who has mastered it. You can see how the hands are moving and hear the sound being made, and if you're lucky, the person will give you tips and advice on how to make it work. It can be even more instructive to watch someone else trying to learn the technique under the supervision of an experienced teacher. Seeing the problems another student encounters and watch-

ing how the teacher helps solve them can aid one in correcting or avoiding similar problems.

Both of these approaches are used in Henry Adler's Hand Development Technique video, in which the veteran teacherwhose students have included Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, and Roy Burns-explains and demonstrates techniques including the basic grip, single and double strokes, and several rudiments. Adler then works with student Gary Capetta on developing these techniques, which is extremely revealing in terms of understanding the subtleties of the hand and finger movements that can be required. Even if one doesn't agree with every facet of Adler's style of technique which has its share of supporters and detractors—the overall concern of developing different muscles and movements should be applicable to any approach. Not only is this video instructive for one wishing to improve hand control, it's also interesting for teachers to observe Adler working with a student.

• Rick Mattingly

### **BOOKS**

# THE SOUL OF HAND DRUMMING

by Doug Soul

Soul Drums P.O. Box 211, Postal Station D

Toronto, Ontario Canada M6P3J8

Price: \$29.95, book and audio tape

With the growing popularity of drumming groups and drum circles, books that supply insight into playing techniques and rhythms are a welcome addition. This publication investigates topics like tuning and care of heads, music notation, sounds, traditional patterns, and world beat circle drumming.

In the chapter on notation, the

author uses a method of squares, grouped in threes and fours, representing rhythmic structure.

Inside each square is an "X,"
"•," "O", or "-" symbol, respectively signifying a closed sound, a "pop" sound, an open sound, and silence. A variation on standard music notation is also used

to instruct the player on what

sound to produce.

The chapter on sounds likewise uses a unique visual aid, with pictures (along with text) used to teach sound production on "small drums," "large drums," bongos, djembe, donno drum, tabla, tonbak, and dorbak. The following chapter, "Mastering Sounds," is the book's longest, with 42 pages dealing with building technique and developing hand fluency using a variety of sound combinations.

The chapter on world beat drum circles is a good idea, beginning with a short explanation of what a drum circle is, then explaining the method of performance and what instruments and rhythms can be used. A part for each instrument is written, using the "box notation" method used earlier in the book.

For those not familiar with standard music notation (the author has wisely assumed many people just starting on hand drums fall into this category), the box notation should be quite useful. And the accompanying audio tape, which parallels the book with examples of sounds and patterns, clarifies the subject matter even further. An interesting alternative.

• Glenn Weber





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# Remembering Rogers A Conversation With Ben Strauss

by Woody Thompson

Of all the American drum companies of this century, one seemed to have timed its life span perfectly. It was a name that arrived on the scene just as the post-war demand for musical instruments began to swell, and disappeared quietly when recession and Asian imports began to signal the decline of the industry in this country. From 1952, when the Rogers Drum Company (a family-owned manufacturer) was bought by Grossman Music, to 1983, when it was sold by CBS—its then parent company—Rogers gained a reputation as one of the most innovative line of drums ever sold.

Those of us lucky enough to play Rogers drums remember their solid heft, their revolutionary hardware design, and the superb sound of their *Dyna-Sonic* snare drum. Rogers drums were "drummerfriendly," and their architecture challenged many of the conventions of drum-making common at the time

A big reason for this innovation and quality was a high level of communication between player and designer, facilitated for twenty-five years by marketing coordinator Ben Strauss. Strauss combined a knowledge of instrument physics with an affection for drummers to help Rogers create a line with many features that today are industry-standard. Though retired since 1976, Strauss recently took time to reminisce about his years with Rogers.

"I was given the position of marketing coordinator," recalls Strauss. "Part of my job was research. People asked where I did my research, and I'd say, 'In the nightclubs. Where else do you see drummers?' I used to watch their trials and tribulations. Drummers would say, 'I don't know why my bass drum creeps, I've got an anchor.' I saw that every time they accented the bass drum, the front would lift up and the drum anchor became useless. I'd go back to the plant and meet with chief engineer Joe Thompson, and we'd try to figure out what to do. We came up with a foot pedal with spurs on it. The more you accented, the more the spurs dug in, and the drum wouldn't move.

"While we were at it, we made the pedal adjustable to how high a person sat. I'd see a drummer in a club and he'd tell me he couldn't get used to our pedal. I'd watch him play and see that he didn't have the



The Swiv-O-Matic foot pedal as advertised in the 1970 Rogers catalog



**Ben Strauss** 

footboard angle set to compensate for the way he was sitting. I'd sit him down and

ask him to put his foot flat on the floor. Then I'd have him raise his toe and tell me when his calf tightened. This was the point at which he needed to angle the footboard. We could also swivel the footboard left or right, and raise the beater assembly to adjust to different size bass drums without changing the length of the stroke. This was all available on the *Swiv-O-Matic* foot pedal."

As a result of many years in the business. Strauss became somewhat of an expert on the efficient use of the body's energy on drumset playing. "So many of the thrones on the market at the time were inefficient—they wobbled," comments Strauss. "You'd get through playing and say, 'My back doesn't feel good.' Some thrones were only adjustable between the holes in the tubing, but we used a threaded rod so you could adjust the seat to within 1/16". We also had a locking device. Once you found the desired height, you never had to change it. There were a lot of hidden things we did to make our product better. We never wanted to be the biggest, only the *best*. Joe Thompson was a brilliant man. I used to spend hours with him. I think I learned more from him than I could have from four years of college."

Another example of a hidden improvement, typical of the company's attention to detail, was the design of their bass drum "T" rods and lug casings. "The way the drum corps worked in those days was that the kids would over-tighten the drums," states Strauss. "Every once in awhile the 'T' handles would pop off, so we designed a hex-shaped rod that had a bead on the end. Rather than solder the handle on the end of the rod, we'd slide it onto the rod from the threaded end. The hex-shape of the rod and the hole in the handle would provide a positive union of handle and rod. Plus, the rod got a little thicker toward the end, providing a strong friction fit. It would never come off.

"We were also the first to take springs out of the lug casings," Strauss continues. "Our engineer said, 'Do you know what that spring is for?' I said to hold the tension rod receiver. He said we could do without it by putting a little groove in the part and putting a C-ring on it. Drummers complained that the springs rattled, and when you stop to think about it, you realize how unnecessary it was to use springs. When

you looked at the drum you'd never see these things, unless somebody was there to tell you about it, and that was part of my job."

One of the hallmarks of Rogers equipment was strength and infinite adjustability, and this was evident in their ball-and-socket *Swiv-O-Matic* tom and cymbal holders. "What started the *Swiv-O-Matic* was that I'd see guys laying into their ride cymbal and suddenly it would let go," says Strauss. "And the tom-toms wouldn't hold. The secret of the *Swiv-O-Matic* was that the ball in the socket was egg-shaped. We had set screws coming in from the side of the casing. When those set screws were tightened, they came above the center of the egg and the ball was forced down

into a pocket. It would never move. There were no notches involved, and you could adjust it to wherever you wanted. And it was usable for a lefty or righty.

"The basic idea for the Swiv-O-Matic holder came from camera tripods. But they were round balls and couldn't take much weight. We solved that by using the eggshaped ball and making the casing out of solid steel. The original Rogers hardware, the collet plates for the tom holder rods, and the knobby units that held the floor tom legs were all steel. They weighed a ton. Later we saw that steel wasn't necessary, and that it was a lot less expensive to make them out of castings. We tested the strength of the castings, and there were no problems. The castings took a lot of weight off the shell and improved the sound. And we were the first to come out with floor tom legs that angled. With straight legs the drum would move away from you. We liked the design so we made our hi-hat pedals and cymbal stands the same way."

The centerpiece of the Rogers line was the *Dyna-Sonic* snare drum, a drum prized by players to this day. The design of the drum incorporated several innovations. "We didn't make our metal snare drums like other companies," says Strauss. "We spun ours. This involved taking a strip of brass and designing in all our features so they could be produced by a very compe-



The famous Rogers Dyna-Sonic snare drum

tent spinner mechanic on a lathe with a collapsible chuck. We put trenches in the drum for strength. These were inward bends in the metal stationed one above center and one below. Every time you bend metal you strengthen it, so we eliminated the possibility of a guy over-tensioning a drum and pulling it out of shape. Joe Thompson came up with this design. We also used a double flange rather than a single coming off the playing surface of the shell. Most companies used one flange going in. We had two flanges going in opposite directions, which further strengthened the shell.

"Our snare beds were also cut differently than anyone else's. When plastic heads took hold, when you tuned the snare head there'd be wrinkles around the bed. This wasn't a problem with calf heads because the head would dry up and conform to the shape of the snare bed. Our idea was that the bed should begin further away from the point at which the snare crossed the shell, and continue gradually to that point. If you visualize the drum as a clock face, we started our bed at about 8:30 and continued it to the 3:30 point. And it was a very shallow cut even at its deepest point—.004" on the Dyna-Sonic and .008" on the Power-Tone models. Our tolerances were that close. We'd make sure the drum was absolutely level on a surface plate before we cut the

bed. Our theory was that you don't push the snares into the head. You let the head come down to meet the snares. That meant we eliminated choking of the snare head.

"Guys would try our snare drum at shows, and before they'd lay a stick on it they'd tighten up the snare. The *Dyna-Sonic* was designed so you didn't want to tighten the snare. You didn't want to pull the snares up against the head, otherwise you'd choke the drum. We designed a frame so the snare was always in position, and the wires were always tensioned where you wanted them. We were very concerned that the snare wires maintain so many coils per inch, and that they weren't stretched out of shape like conventional snare

mechanisms. It's amazing the difference the number of snare coils per inch made in the response. The snare frame also eliminated cords or plastic snare plates that could deaden the snare head. The snare could *kiss* the bottom head without choking it, and you'd get the snare to resonate by striking any point on the batter head.

"There was a tension screw to adjust the snare on the frame," Strauss continues. "We didn't provide separate tensioning for each snare strand. I tried a little experiment once where I tuned each strand to the same tension, and it sounded like there was only one strand. The overtones created by each strand needed to be a little different to get

the snare sound we wanted.

"Our *Dyna-Sonic* was more expensive than other snare drums," Strauss adds, "and we didn't expect to sell a lot of them. We'd sell to the guys who could appreciate the difference. But we couldn't keep up with the demand. We *never* expected that kind of response."

Rogers attracted many fine endorsers over the years, including Roy Burns, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Ed Shaughnessy, and Bobby Rosengarden. Among the many drummers that Strauss worked with, Buddy stands out in his memory. In 1959, Buddy left Ludwig, whose drums he had been endorsing, and let it be known that he was looking for a new company. "Everybody except Ludwig went to the Metropole in New York," Strauss recalls. "Buddy was trying out drums on the second floor. He had an audition for drums, and Rogers won

"The following week Buddy was opening in Philadelphia, so we got a set together quick for him. We used a 22" bass drum. He used a 24", but we didn't have one at the time. I said to Buddy, 'Use the 22". You're playing in a small group and you won't need the 24" anyway.' After the first set he said the tom-tom was about 3" too far to the left and the ride cymbal was too high. So Ellis Tollin, our dealer in Philadelphia, and I went back to his store and found a 6" cymbal arm and another bass drum. I told Buddy to show me exactly where he wanted the tom, and we mounted the holder on the new bass drum. The next night everything was fine, and he never changed the setup after that. And you know something? He was easy to work with. You hear all kinds of stories about Buddy, but we got along very well."

Among collectors of Rogers drums, as well as Fender guitars and amps, the words "pre-CBS" have a magical effect. The implication is that the corporate takeover of these smaller companies ruined the quality of the product. Yet Strauss worked for Rogers for ten years under CBS and is quick to disagree. "People complained that under CBS we were making our shells lighter," states Strauss. "We weren't mak-

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ing them lighter. We still got them from the Keller Corporation, who had always provided our shells. We continued to operate out of the Covington plant for three years after the CBS takeover—same people, same suppliers. But there are guys who make a point of saying that old is better."

Strauss retired in 1976 after working for Rogers for twenty-five years, but he continued as a consultant for the company until 1979. In '83, CBS sold Rogers to a group of individuals who were running the Rogers/Fender Division, and the new owners decided to dissolve Rogers Drums. "They decided they could make a lot more money with guitars," claims Strauss. "And they were right. There wasn't that much money in drums because there was so much hand work involved. We used to say that if we worked as hard in some other business, we'd be worth a lot of money."

Not only did Strauss' work with Rogers benefit drummers, his career seems to have totally agreed with the man himself. "I had a great life in the drum business. I look back on it fondly. I met a helluva lot of nice people. I traveled all over the country. I went to Japan and Europe. I never got bored with my job. And I found out that drummers are the most clannish group of musicians around. When a trumpet player gets into town, he doesn't start looking up other trumpet players. But a drummer *does*. And I enjoyed that. I really did."

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# Tony Williams: "Touch Me"

### Transcribed by Frank Young

This month's *Drum Soloist* features Tony Williams on a cut from his 1988 release, *Angel Street* (Blue Note CDP7 48494 2). In the following solo Tony gives a lesson on how to use technique in a musical way. After the opening 8th-note section (based on Swiss triplets), Tony displays his tremendous single-stroke



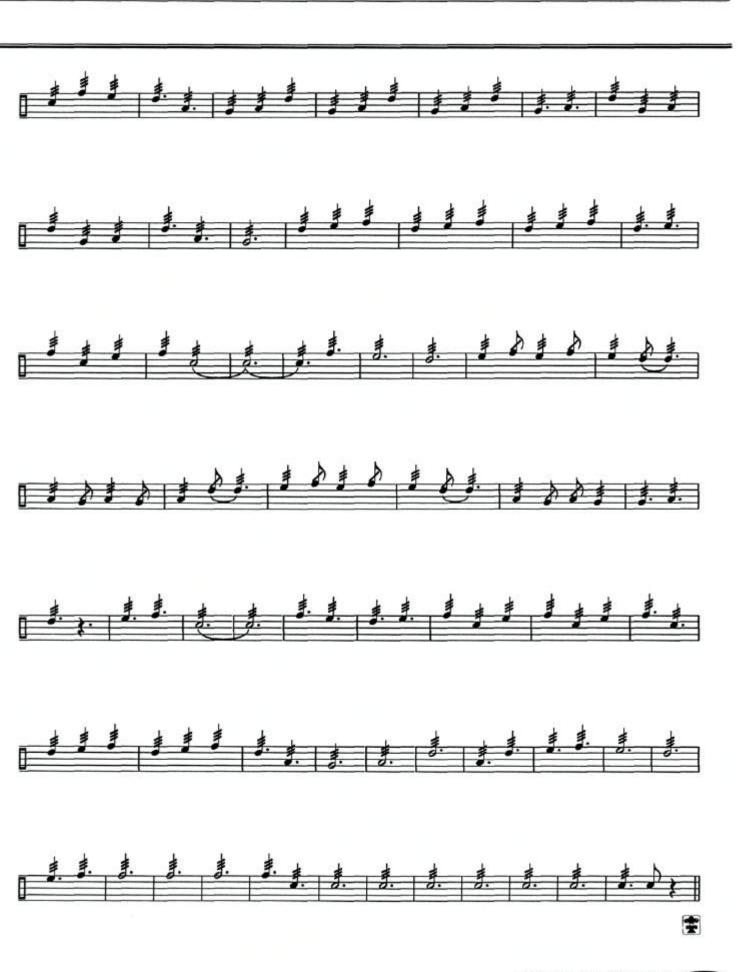
roll chops. (The snares are turned off for this solo, so the highest tom sound is actually the snare drum.) Tony plays the rolls in a very *legato* manner (except where the dots indicate *staccato* rolls), adding an extra challenge to the technique. But even more impressive is how Tony *shapes* the rolls, turning the solo into a complete musical work.











# **Selecting Cymbals:**

### What To Listen For

by Hugo Pinksterboer

Professional cymbal testers don't listen for what's in a cymbal. They mainly concentrate on what's *not*. This demands a 100% clear, true image of the supposed factory-prescribed sound of the cymbal in question—which is the main reason to do it the other way around when you're buying cymbals. What to listen for in a cymbal varies from type to type, yet there are a number of general things to pay attention to.

Harmony and frequency: The sound of a cymbal should be harmonic and even, excluding most Chinas and other specialty sounds. Wavering frequencies, interfering overtones, and other disturbing effects—as well as the entire beauty and potential of the cymbal—can be discovered by playing it various ways. A blow or roll with a timpani mallet or yarn marimba mallet will cause the entire frequency range to come to life, without the influence of the harsh tip of a drumstick. The lowest partials will become audible when using the same mallet softly near the edge of the cymbal. The cymbal can be made to build up by increasing the force of your strikes. Be aware of the *blending* of the harmonics.

The higher frequencies can be triggered by playing near the cup, preferably with a nylon-tip stick. The interval between the notes you hear should be in harmony with the low note that you'll find near the edge.

Eccentrics can also trigger the higher frequencies and harmonics by blowing softly along the edge of the cymbal. It works, so don't be concerned with anyone who might be staring at you!

**Pitch:** Cymbals are non-pitched instruments. Whether a cymbal is judged as being high, medium, or low depends on its predominant frequency range. A good cymbal produces frequencies in *each* of

those three areas. They all have a certain function in the sound. The proportions between them determine the character of the cymbal to a large degree.

Volume: Volume is very hard to judge in a shop. Besides the size of the shop compared to the size of your average stage, all kinds of things may influence your perception of the actual loudness of the cymbal. A ride cymbal with a very defined ping will seem louder than a ride that builds up very strongly. The same goes for high versus low crashes. Comparing cymbals with the ones you know is the best way to get a realistic idea.

**Response:** Response is the time it takes the cymbal to react to your stick attack. Crashes demand a quick response, while ride cymbals should respond more slowly to avoid too much build-up of overtones. Generally, thinner cymbals respond quicker than heavier ones. The most accurate way to judge response is by playing *softly*. With a lot of force, any cymbal responds.

Sustain: The sustain of a cymbal largely depends on the decay of the high frequencies, since they are the first to cut out. The lows will go on for quite a long time. This can easily be detected with your ear close to the edge of the instrument. But an audience will not perceive the lowest frequencies. They'll mainly hear the highs. So pay more attention to their decay.

**Dynamic range:** Try each cymbal at different volume levels in order to find out about their dynamic range. Some cymbals only sound good when played very hard. Others are more effective in low-volume situations. Few can do both.

**Dynamic sensitivity:** Dynamic sensitivity mainly has to do with the way the cymbal responds to variations in the force of your strokes. The more sensitive a cymbal is, the more versatile it will be. Such cymbals require more control to make them sound, even when riding them. Cymbals

also differ in the way they respond to different sticks, grips, playing angles, etc. This goes mainly for ride cymbals.

**Do it all:** Play each cymbal every way you can think of. Ride crashes, crash rides, play hi-hats open, closed, half open, on the side, or on top, use the cup, and play with butt ends if you're used to doing so.

Now let's look at the specifics of the different types of cymbals.

### **Ride Cymbals**

While rides may be crashed and crashes may be ridden, generally their purposes and the way they're played are quite dissimilar. A ride cymbal needs more of a predominant note than a crash. It has to speak at a certain range. This goes for the cup as well. At the same time, the sound has to blend with *any* identifiable pitch, with any chord. Therefore, a full scale of harmonics is needed. A ride cymbal without any spread and shimmer will sound flat, shallow, and one-dimensional. A metal ashtray would do the same for less money.

**Overtones:** A good ride cymbal has to produce a fine blend of ping and shimmer. The ratio between these two aspects may differ strongly depending on your taste and the style of music you play. In a music shop, overtone build-up will seem much stronger than it will actually be on stage. Stepping away from the cymbal may work well in making a better judgment.

If you're worried about loss of definition because of all of these overtones, though, try crashing the cymbal with considerable power. Play a ride pattern on it immediately afterwards. If the ping can clearly be distinguished from the first stroke, things should be okay. The one-ear-closed trick may help as well.

Discern between the build-up of undertones and overtones. The lower harmonics help the sound to sustain and give it body. The higher ones increase projection. The best way to judge the building up of overtones is to ride the cymbal in a slow *crescendo*, going from very soft to the point where the overtones cover up the ping completely. On very heavy cymbals the latter may never occur.

**Pitch:** More than one pitch can be distinguished: the pitch of the ping (attack), and the pitches of the dominating ranges of harmonics. Generally a high-pitched ping will be combined with mostly higher harmonics, but there are also ride cymbals with a fairly high ping and dominating low overtones, or vice versa.

Response and feel: Ride cymbals should have a slow response. If the response is too quick, where the entire cymbal responds at once to your strokes, there will be no definition—no ping. Next to response, in the sense of how fast the cymbal speaks, ride cymbals differ in the way they react to your stick. The feel or rebound may vary from harsh and sturdy

on unlathed, heavy rides to flexible and supple on thin, hand-hammered types.

**Sustain:** Ride cymbals are expected to fill the silence between two beats, even at slow tempos. Listen for the sustain, especially of the highs. Play the cymbal at slow and fast tempos and at various volume levels.

**Attack:** Listen for the *type* of attack sound—what you hear the moment the stick touches the cymbal. This may vary from a very bright ping to an extremely dry or throaty tick.

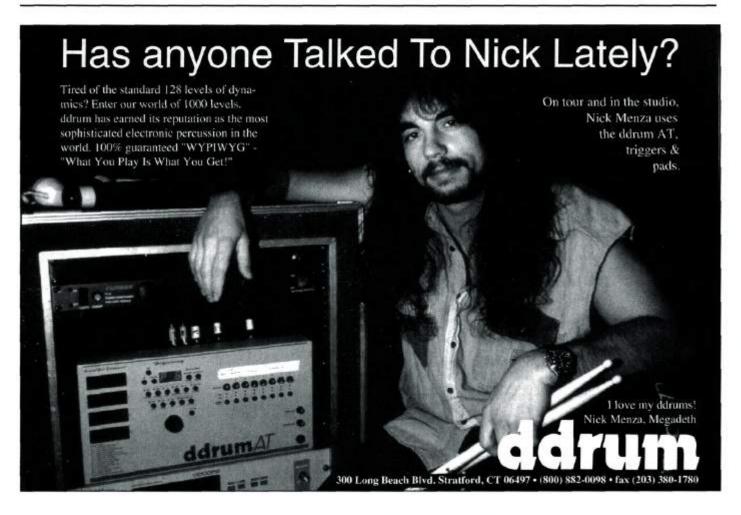
Cup: Play the cup with the shoulder of the stick and with the tip. The sound should be clear without excessive overtones. It needs some body and should not produce any disturbing frequencies. Find out if the character and the loudness of the bell matches the characteristics of the cymbal itself.

**Sweet spot:** Ride cymbals may have a sweet spot. This is the place between the

bell and the edge where it sounds best. It's the spot where the cymbal gives you good definition—along with helpful undertones and overtones that color the sound but don't get in the way. Finding the sweet spot may take months—as may learning how to *play* it.

**Position:** Even the slightest variation in the thickness of a cymbal, or a hole that is just off center, will cause the cymbal to return to the same position every time you play it. Find out if this is the case with the cymbal you intend to buy. Spin it around a few times and see if it comes to rest in the same place. If so, test the cymbal in that position.

Versatility: Besides all the different ways there are to play a cymbal, it's good to find out if your future ride cymbal is suited for occasional crash effects as well. Some will lend themselves to this purpose better than others. A cymbal with a high bow and of considerable weight won't do



for subtle crashes, nor for loud ones. Also try crashing the cymbal with the shoulder of the stick in the ride area, and see how it responds to dead-sticking.

### Hi-hats

Selecting hi-hat cymbals may take a lot of time. You have to deal with *two* different cymbals that may be combined in numerous ways, and that you may play with a number of different techniques. Have two or three hi-hat stands and a number of spare clutches at hand. That saves you a lot of time changing top cymbals. Within one series and size, bottom cymbals—due to their heavier weight—tend to sound more similar to each other than top cymbals.

**Pitch:** Two cymbals means having two pitches to deal with. Usually the top cymbal has a lower pitch than the bottom. Together they produce the pitch of your hihat.

Distinguish between the pitch, sustain,

response, and volume by playing the hi-hat with sticks rather than with your foot. The interval in pitch between the two cymbals affects both volume and projection. A wider interval implies more presence, everything else being equal.

**Sustain and response:** The sustain and response time of a pair of hi-hats mostly depends on the top cymbal, but the bottom one plays a role also. Splash the cymbals with a *quick* motion of your foot and listen carefully. Also play patterns with your sticks, opening and closing the hi-hats frequently.

Combinations: Each pair of hi-hats has its own sound character, which may vary from extremely focused to wide and large, from high to low, and from gentle to harsh. The combination of cymbals has a lot to do with this. Try different combinations, played with your foot as well as with sticks.

**Hollow:** Hi-hats should not sound hollow in the closed position. Varying the

pressure of your foot when playing them in a closed position may display such effects.

**Sweep:** Hi-hats that are too thin and/or too flat may produce a sweeping sound when being closed, right after the initial chick. Exchange tops and bottoms to find the guilty one.

**Cross-matching:** Cross-matching is making combinations of hi-hat cymbals from different series or brands. This isn't always appreciated by shopkeepers. Some manufacturers list cross-matched pairs. Usually these are combinations of very heavy bottoms and relatively light tops. Examples are Zildjian's K/Z hi-hats and Sabian *Fusion Hats*, which combine an AA or HH top with a *Leopard* series bottom.

**Single cymbals:** With one extra bottom or top cymbal, you may get a completely different sound from your hi-hats. It's a much cheaper way to have a variety of sounds than by buying a second pair, too. UFIP used to sell packages of three hi-hat cymbals in the late '80s. These *Tn-hats* 

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consisted of one bottom and two top cymbals. Zildjian listed similar packages in the mid '80s.

Warped hi-hats: Warped hi-hat cymbals somewhat reduce the risk of airlock, but won't sound tight when played softly.

Some people go for slightly warped hi-hats because they feel they respond better to pitch-bend effects achieved by varying the pressure on the pedal. Apart from these variations, it's better to find a pair of flat ones. You'll then be able to control airlock and any other effects *yourself*.

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### **Crash Cymbals**

Just like rides, crashes have a certain predominant pitch. The overtones, however, are more present. Try a crash cymbal at various volumes and with various playing techniques (glancing, popping, dead-sticking) and find out whether it sounds in harmony with itself, without any disturbing frequencies.

**Pitch:** Thin crashes may *seem* to sound higher than medium crashes of the same size and series, though the *opposite* is actually true. Higher frequencies simply respond faster. That may be very misleading, especially in test situations. Step away, or close one of your ears.

Sustain, attack, and response: When listening to crashes in a music store, they always seem to ring longer than you would like. Apart from the familiar hints to find out about these things, sustain, attack, and response time can be checked by giving the cymbal a few quick blows. If each blow is clearly audible, the sustain will not be overwhelming and the response will be quite quick.

**Response:** A good crash cymbal gives you a quick spread of both high and low

overtones. As opposed to a ride cymbal, a crash *has* to respond quickly. Play the cymbal at various volume levels and find the level of power it needs to start vibrating entirely—that is, the *minimum* amount of power to make it work as a crash. If you hear highs emerging some time after the blow, response is bound to be slow. Also try crashes for ride and cup sounds, and do *not* decide until after you've heard crashes in combination with a bass drum.

**Rumble:** If you hold your ear close to the edge, slight traces of rumble may be detected. A soft blow will trigger it. These low frequencies can be picked up in the studio, especially when close-miking.

Contrast: Differences in the sound of crash cymbals will be much more evident in a shop than they will be on stage. If you're playing with a PA, quite dissimilar crash cymbals will tend to sound very much *alike* once they reach the audience. Try to find strongly contrasting sounds if you want your audience to hear some nuances as well.

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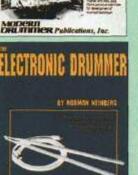
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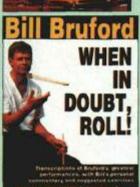




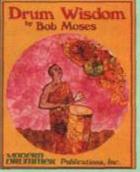


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# Heirs To The Throne

### Kofi Baker

by Robyn Flans

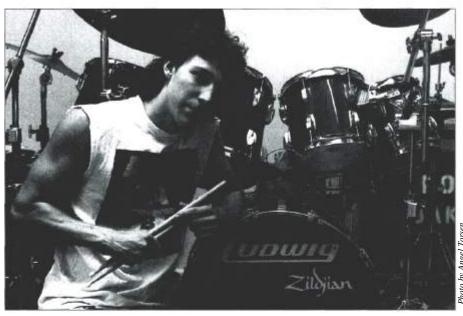
Kofi Baker laughs when he reads what his father, Ginger, said about him in a recent cover story in *Modern Drummer*: "Sometimes I hear him disappearing off on a tangent. He gets very involved sometimes with complicated nonsense and I have to go and straighten him out."

"He's forgotten what he was like when he was a kid," Kofi says, smiling. "If you listen to Cream, compared to what else was going on at the time, what he was doing was very different. He broke boundaries, but the boundaries are different now. I'm into jazz; Tony Williams is one of my favorite drummers. I'm more into complicated stuff than my dad is. He went through it, though. He's just being a dad now.

"Dad taught me a paradiddle and a mommy-daddy when I was about five," says Kofi. "But it wasn't until he left home—when I was about nine—that I really got interested in drumming. I made up a kit from old pieces he had left. I had no tomtoms, but I had some African drums, which were really short, and I would play on those."

At fifteen, Kofi joined his dad in Italy, and Ginger gave him some additional instruction. "He taught me to sight-read and showed me things like 3 against 4, which opened up a whole new door for me. He gave me some good pointers, like how the left foot is the time-keeper and the other three limbs can play whatever else you need to play. He taught me to always keep the time-keeper going because it's good independence. You can keep the rest of the band in when you're going into some weird cross-time fill.

"It was the worst time to go to my dad, though," continues Kofi, "because that's when his second wife left him and there was no money. As if that weren't enough, just



about that time I got word that my mother and two sisters had been evicted from their house in England, and I had to return to get my gear sorted out."

Since there was no money for transportation, father and son decided to put on a concert. "We worked out some drum stuff with two drumkits," says Kofi. "We played opposite parts: Our kick drums and hi-hats would be in opposite places, so the whole thing would make a picture between the parts. We'd swap parts, answering each other. Then we each did a solo, which was fun. We did an hour set, and it was packed."

After his return to England, Kofi was hired by Steve Marriott. It was the most money he had made up to that point, but it wasn't an ideal gig. "He always used to say, 'Keep it simple, Baker.' I overplayed," he admits with a laugh. "It was very subdued for me. He did give me drum solos, though.

"I like to tell a story in a solo," Kofi continues. "I see other drum solos where the drummer just flashes his technique, and if you're another drummer, that's okay, but it's not musical. I start off with a theme, although it's different every time. My drum solos are always over time. If I'm going to change time signatures, I take a rhythm and

play it over the other rhythm and then go onto it, so people can understand. That's where my polyrhythms come in."

The other problem with Marriott was that he wouldn't let Kofi practice on the tour bus. "I love to practice," says Kofi, "and he was going, 'Shut up. This is my band....' So I thought, 'Fine, I'm going to get my own band so I can practice when I want.""

Lost City was the band he found. You may have seen it advertised as a "Sons of Cream" union, a fact the drummer prefers to see downplayed. "I am who I am," says Kofi, who seems to be very well-adjusted to the fact that his dad is famous. "Why try to make it a really big thing? If I met you and said, 'Hi, I'm Ginger Baker's son,' you'd think, 'What an asshole!' Malcolm Bruce [Jack's son, who has since departed] was really just a hired guy—and the press never even mentions the bass player, Slobo."

Although Baker first got together with Bruce to do a track, it was Rue Phillips who brought them to America to get involved with his record deal. "When Atlantic offered us a quarter-million-dollar record deal, Malcolm said no, he wasn't ready for that. He wanted to go to school. That's when Rue and I had to learn to work togeth-

### **Erin Davis**

### by Robyn Flans

At the tender age of twenty-two, Erin Davis knows what it's like to be both a member of the elite and a member of the masses. Specifically, his career has shifted from touring the world with his dad, the late Miles Davis, to playing local clubs with a promising—but struggling—new rock band.

At the age of four, Erin was banging on his dad's set. When his parents separated, Erin lived in Phoenix, but he'd visit his father some weekends in California. "When he saw that I was interested in drums," says Erin, "my dad gave me this tape of Prince's 1999 and said. 'Learn how to play along with this stuff.' I'd work on that whenever I'd come out, like once a month. When I was fourteen, I went on tour with him. My cousin, Vincent Wilburn, Jr., was the drummer, and I got really inspired by watching him.

"I went on the road with my dad again the next year, and I started roadying for Vince. I did the same thing for the next three summers, when the drummer was Ricky Wellman. He was also inspirational to me. Then in 1990 I joined the band as the electronic percussionist," he says with a little chortle. "I had two solo spots, but I didn't really know what to do. It was pretty nervewracking."

Working with his father could sometimes be rough on Erin. "Even though I had been on tour with him as a roadie for a while," he says, "everything seemed new. All the guys I had been working with were now setting up my stuff. Dad was going, 'Wear what you like, and play what you feel.' A week later, it was, 'You can't wear that, you can't play that. You've got to play this.' Then the next week it was, 'Wear whatever you want, try some of this....' It was nerve-wracking, but it was a good experience. I wish I could actually play in that band again for one tour,



because I know I could do better now. I didn't really think about being in the Miles Davis Band until after I wasn't in it anymore. Then it was like, 'Wow, I was in that band."

Things got considerably rougher when Erin joined a speed metal band called Grandma's Third Battalion. He learned some serious lessons. "I had been playing in my dad's band in Europe in soccer stadiums, bullrings, and opera houses," says Erin. "But this band would play parties and backyard things where people would crash into my drums and knock our amps over. When I joined Bloodline, my current band, I thought it would be a step up. I thought that with a band that featured the sons of several famous guys-and a fifteen-year-old smoking guitar player, as a novelty—we wouldn't have to pay too many dues. But a year and a half later, we've done gigs from bars to corporate parties where we've been forced to shut down because we were too loud.

"I was into metal," Erin continues, "and I was used to seeing the big-name acts at the in-between clubs. I thought we'd play an opening slot for those types of bands. I never thought we'd have to start from the

real bottom and work our way up so slowly. We made a demo tape that we were very high on, but half the companies we called said they weren't taking demos. I never figured on that kind of stuff. I just thought, 'If it's a good demo, wham! You get signed."

It wasn't quite that easy. Bloodline came together in 1991, when a girl Davis knew mentioned him to Sammy Hagar's son Aaron. "It was a new vein of music for me." recalls Erin. "The band was called the Sons at the time, because besides Aaron they also had the son of the Doors' Robbie Krieger, and the son of the Allman Brothers' Berry Oakley-along with Smokin' Bonamassa on guitar and Lou Segretti on keyboards. I tried out in November of '91, but I hadn't been practicing and didn't really know anything about blues rock. For the audition, I had to learn 'Hoochie Coochie Man,' which the Allman Brothers recorded a version of, 'Roadhouse Blues' by the Doors, 'Remember The Heroes' by Sammy Hagar, and Talk To Your Daughter,' by Robben Ford [no relation to anyone in the bandl. 'Remember The Heroes' and 'Talk To Your Daughter' were fairly easy, and I had learned 'Roadhouse Blues' earlier on my own. But 'Hoochie Coochie Man' was

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### KOFI BAKER

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er. Rue had never sung polyrhythms before, and we'd have huge arguments. Eventually, though, he would try it, and I would play the same thing so he'd get the hang of it. After he did, we wrote 'Egypt' and 'Believer' with odd times."

Kofi spent time working with Slobo as well. "Slobo really learned the album," he says. "When he auditioned, he ran it off amazingly; he had everything down. He could sing and jam with a really good feel. Later on, I found out he didn't really understand the cross-time stuff, he had learned it. When it comes to a live show now, I have to be careful. If I go too far out, I lose the band. I have the hi-hat going all the time, but sometimes it gets so extreme that they get thrown. It sounds really good when they can do it, though." Giving credit where it's due, Kofi adds that Rue Phillips has written some simpler, more commercial material that is important for radio sensibility.

Currently living in Malibu, Baker is unsure as to the future of Lost City. He was not thrilled with the way their debut Scotti Brothers album was mixed ("The drum sound is the worst I've heard in my life," he says), and he is actively involved in a group called Orphasm, which at the time of this interview was as yet unsigned. Orphasm's music—which Kofi describes as more jazz/fusion—is closer to his pleasure, and he'd just as soon be concentrating on it.

Kofi says he would also love to have the opportunity to enter the session world. In any event, he has no problem keeping busy, because of his extensive practice schedule. "I practice on the full kit for about four hours," says Kofi, "practicing rudiments and independence things I can't do well. I also work on linear phrasing, which is what Dave Weckl does a lot. I grew up playing independence stuff, so that is better than my linear phrasing."

Kofi's acoustic set consists of Zildjian cymbals and a Ludwig single bass kit. "I'm fond of the hi-hat," he says, "and besides, when I first started playing, my dad said, 'Don't ever go into double bass drums until you've mastered single.' I still don't think I've mastered it. In the evening I spend about four hours with my electronic kit,

playing more rudiments and making up my own exercises."

When Kofi isn't on the drums, he enjoys weight-lifting, which he feels helps his drumming. "I've always been really skinny, like my dad," he says. "The only way I can gain weight is to work out and eat a lot. Drumming is so aerobic. I really enjoy doing a weight-lifting session and then practicing, which calms me down."

Kofi's goals are simple, for the drums are his passion: "To be able to play drums and not worry about anything else," he says. "Just to be there, playing the drums."



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my worst nightmare ever. I didn't realize that there were two drummers in the Allman Brothers, and I was going, 'What the hell is he playing?' I played along with the tape and I figured I had it. I went to the audition and it was terrible. But somehow I got the gig."

Erin experienced one touchy aspect of hand life early on, when musical and personal differences led the group to fire Aaron Hagar. "At first," recalls Erin, "I was thinking. 'That's horrible, he got me into the band.' But then I realized it would be best for the band. Berry was going to take over the lead singing, and his voice really fits the band more, so that's what happened."

Writing for their album was another new experience for Erin and the rest of the band. For one thing, co-writers were brought in to work with them. "At first we didn't want any co-writers; our young egos couldn't take it," Davis admits. "But when it was decided that we would have a co-writer, it was like being in school. We learned all the stuff we were missing. Mark Hudson, our cowriter/co-producer, would show us all kinds of cool things—an accent here or a different bridge—stuff that we wouldn't normally

come up with. We're all young."

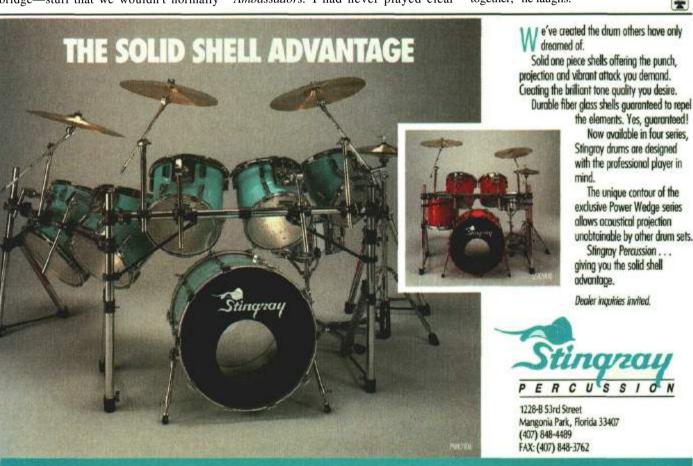
The studio was new to them as well. "We had recorded our demos in a big rehearsal hall with a remote truck," says Erin. "This time, we recorded at George Lucas's Skywalker Ranch. It was really hard not being right beside the guys and having monitors blasting in our ears. I was in this huge orchestra room and they were in isolation booths. I could barely see them or hear them through the headphones. Everything was a challenge. We only had a week and a half to do the record; I had never heard of anyone doing that. As part of my preparation for the project, I had watched Metallica's video on how they made their record—and they spent at least a month just on drum tracks.

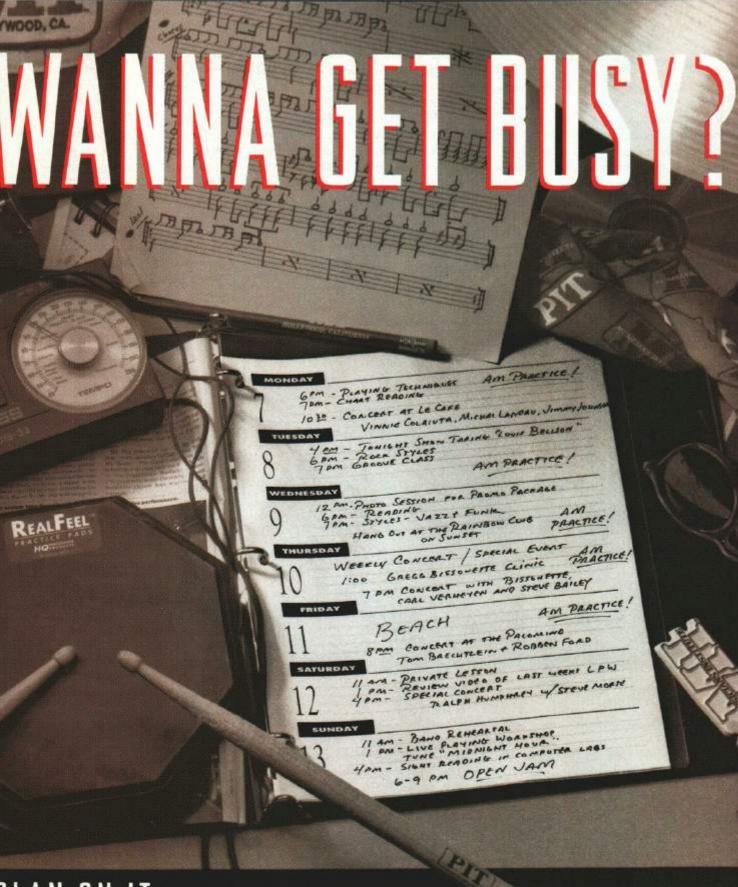
"I literally had to learn how to tune the drums," Erin continues. "No one ever taught me that. I tune my snare drum real tight, so when I hit it, it just goes 'bing.' They had it real loose. It sounded fine in the control room, but I had to hit everything twice as hard. I play really hard anyway, but when you play live, there's a group feel and everyone is charged. In the studio, you're playing to get it on tape. It's just different. Mark Hudson helped me with the tuning. I had to change from Pinstripes to clear Ambassadors. I had never played clear Ambassadors on the toms before, but they did sound good." (Davis uses DW drums and Zildjian cymbals and sticks.)

"I asked a lot of questions," Erin recalls. "I just wanted to know what was going on, like, 'What was wrong with that take?' Our producer, Phil Ramone, would say, 'The magic wasn't there.' Then we'd do it again and again. The newness of the studio process just made it difficult for me to figure out where the magic was. I can say right now that I'm not a good studio player, but I plan to work on it. It's too bad you can't practice in a studio."

Does Erin feel pressured to live up to the legend that is his father? "I honestly don't feel that much pressure," he says. "If I were playing trumpet, I'd definitely feel it. But I'm playing drums and I'm in a different style of music. I do feel pressure in that I want to be looked at in much the same way, though. I mean, I want to be up there with all the guys I knew back then. So it's not pressure from being the son, but the pressure of being a musician.

"I want to be as good as Jim Keltner is in the studio and Gregg Bissonette is live. And I want to be as good as Butch and Jaimo [the *two* drummers for the Allman Brothers] together," he laughs.





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my solo playing. Having the whole evening on my shoulders, doing it all myself, I learned how to play less—and when playing with musicians, I learned how to listen more to what the instruments were doing."

It often seems that with most drummers, adding more equipment is an excuse to play more. "To me it was different," states Pierre. "It was as if I had more voices. In 1971 I started studying classical music, piano, and composition. I did that for eight years and realized a lot. My teacher, who

was over seventy years old at that time, came from the Viennese tradition. I realized how to match the instruments, to orchestrate them.

"At sixteen I wanted to be a jazz drummer, but later I realized that I was born here in Europe but didn't know anything about the *music* from here. So I needed to study that and find out how things work. I feel that I went back in a way, but still forward in my drumming. I feel a great affinity with the older drummers, the African drummers and all that. I was never 'banging' on the drums...maybe that was my

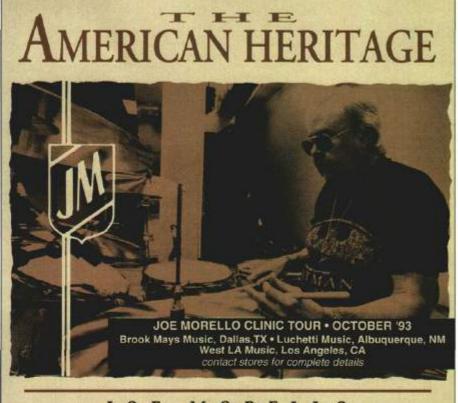
weak point. But this way I was more secure to meet the real tradition of drumming."

Ethnic music also figures prominently in Pierre's background. He is at home playing many African and Brazilian instruments, like the talking drum and the berimbau, even though he never had any formal training on them. So how did he learn? "I played with people," he says. "I played for eight years with T.V. Gopalkrishnan, who's an Indian mridangam master from Madras. It was never formal, but we played a lot. I felt this was a way to kind of get the spirit without having the structure, because I didn't have the time to go there and study for years. But I wanted to take the essence of it and add it to my playing. That's what I did with the Africans, too."

All of this discovery and study, both formal and informal, helped Pierre form his own vision of percussion: what he calls "singing drums." "The whole concept is melodic," he explains, "an orchestral concept on drums. That's why I started using two different bass drums, an 18" on the right and a 24" on the left—as big as I can get and still be able to carry it around. The possibility is to play certain rhythms with my feet—not just to have *faster* feet. I didn't want to get into the double bass drum roll thing.

"I have the drums tuned in a melodic way, and I always choose my cymbals melodically, so I have a certain mode in them parallel to the tuning of the drums. I was looking for melodies because I was thinking, 'I'm practicing all these licks, going right, going left...but *this* gives different melodies.'

"Of course," Pierre continues, "when I play drums I'm always singing, whether consciously or not. This is nothing new, but it's still not so common. And I do the same thing with my feet—I sing a line and then play it. I rarely think in terms of licks. This started when I was around twenty. I heard this tape of Miles with Bill Evans. I was so shocked by Bill Evans and the way he played these strong phrases. I tried to play like him on the drums. And I remember Sonny Rollins...! played a lot of him on the drums, trying to play like a tenor sax. And that's what I teach. I tell my students to play a solo, but to make the first part a chorus of piano, then go to a tenor sax solo, and at the end, play a bass solo. They look at me like I'm crazy, but it



JOE MORELLO

Drum Workshop and Sabian honor the great tradition of American drumming by saluting Joe Morello, whose work with The Dave Brubeck Quartet from 1956 to 1968 secured his position as both an important and influential figure in the history of modern drumming. Joe's performance on The Brubeck Quartet's legendary recording of "Take Five" is but one example of his pioneering odd-meter drumming that featured a smooth, flowing, swinging style punctuat-

ed by brilliantly developed drum breaks and solos. In addition, Joe's extraordinary snare drum technique coupled with a musical, melodic, non-technical approach towards the drumset helped advance and generate interest in Jazz drumming at a time when rock 'n' roll was fast becoming the mainstream of popular music. Soll active as a player, teacher and author, Joe Morello was voted into Modern Drummer Magazine's HALL OF FAME in 1988.

Joe Morello plays DW Drums, Pedals & Hardware and Sabian Cymbals.

makes them play differently.

"How do I make these melodies heard for my audience as well as for myself, so I can do more with all the technical material? At first it was kind of abstract with the cymbals, but later I built two and a half octaves of tuned gongs and then added two octaves of crotales as well. I never went for marimbas and all that, because they never fit in my set concept. I'm still looking for ideas that suit the kind of sounds around me, all the gongs and this resonance.

"The conception of these metals is harmonic. I think of it like in the theater, where you have the acting and the scene. Scenes can also change, so I think of the harmony like that. I choose my gongs like that. Certain ones are really disturbing, others add dimensions. The same with the cymbals, high to low. I also try to have certain sections, like baritone, tenor, alto, and soprano. I have my things organized on the drums in certain sections."

In 1984 this idea carried over to Pierre's all-percussion group, Singing Drums. The ensemble featured American jazz drummer Paul Motian, Brazilian percussionist Nana Vasconcelos, and fellow Swiss drummer Fredy Studer. Rather than rehashing old percussion literature or adapting standard pieces to fit the format, Pierre composed all the music for the ensemble.

Much of the idea of this group was based around Pierre's own personal concept. "We each had a different set of cymbals," he says. "Fredy had a baritone set, Paul played tenor cymbals, and I played alto and soprano. We were singing like opera singers; that's the feel when we play—we sing on the cymbals.

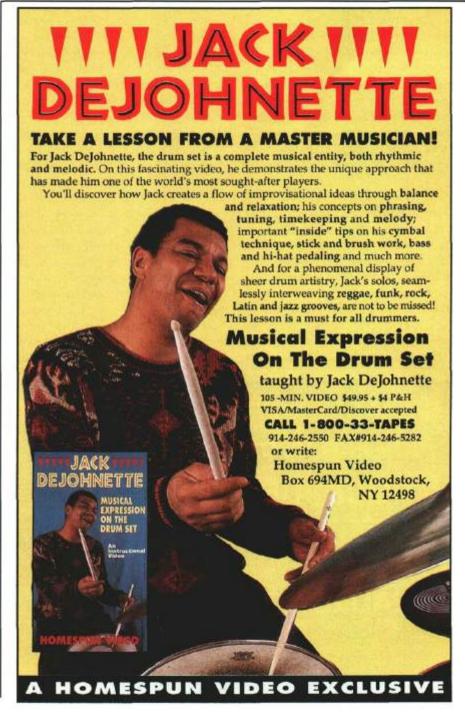
"I gave them basic rhythms, or themes," Favre continues, "and we rehearsed for a whole week. It was mostly letting them know what I was thinking, like with the different cymbal sections. What everybody played was actually very free. I had the idea of Duke Ellington as the ideal way to compose for improvisers—not having too strict a structure, but also writing specific tunes for different soloists. For instance, some things were for Nana; the brush piece 'Edge Of The Wing' was for Paul.

"The way we worked tells a lot," Pierre says. "We could just play around triplets, or on the gong piece 'Beyond The Blue,' I specified the places to play, directing the accents with my head. This was done a lot. When we arrived at our first concert, it was a program with room to improvise, but with a real steady framework. We did two concerts after that and we didn't change anything. The order of the pieces was always the same."

Even with the caliber of players involved, a touring jazz percussion ensemble was not an easy venture. Fortunately the proceedings were recorded for posterity by ECM records. The music on this album covers a lot of different styles and textures, and the four musicians work together so well that it's often difficult to tell which

parts are written and which are improvised.

"Singing Drums was supposed to be a group," says Pierre. "The idea came up, some people helped in finding the money to do it, and then Manfred Eicher wanted to make a record. The tour was such a success in Europe that we tried to do it again. Everybody wanted to do it because it was such a fantastic atmosphere in the group. We were just laughing and making jokes, but there was no money. Paiste tried to get some funds to help, and I tried to get some funds from a Swiss culture group, but no way. Everything was refused and then I



had to undertake it myself. A year ago some people asked for it, but I felt it was too late to get it together again after so many years."

While Pierre is involved in many different playing situations, he prefers to work in a duo setting. Besides the previously mentioned duos with Irene Schweizer and T.V. Gopalkrishnan, he has worked extensively with bassist Leon Francioli, saxophonist John Surman, and many drummers, including Fredy Studer (as Drum Orchestra). "When I do these things with painted sounds," Pierre says, "it needs time, and I need to know the person very well. In a duo I can concentrate more on the playing of the other person. Groups need a lot of writing and rehearsals. It's easier for two people to organize musically because you can really listen and interact. With more people it has to be orchestrated. We had a trio with Albert Mangelsdorff and Leon Francioli. Our record was called Triologue, to make it clear from dialog, because it was a trio where all three were speaking together."

Pierre recently played duo concerts with an oud player from Tunisia, Anouar Brahem, who has also worked with saxophonist Jan Garbarek. The two plan to make a recording for ECM together along with New York cellist David Darling. But Pierre's most remarkable and lasting duo is that with French vocalist Tamia. To call her a singer would be putting limits on her abilities. She uses her voice as an instrument, soaring both above and below

Pierre's percussive framework. At times she produces eerie harmonics that blend with Pierre's singing gongs and cymbals. Perhaps it's fitting that man's two oldest instruments, voice and drums, combine so well.

"We started in 1972 at the Chateauvallon Festival in France," Favre explains, "This was as part of Michel Portal's group. In that concept we had a spot for a duo, then we decided to make a real duo later on. We first had a duo by correspondence, then eight years later we met again, and we've played together since.

"We compose the music. Each of us has our tunes. We compose and then rehearse, saying, 'Do you like?' 'What can I change?' With the improvisations we try to figure out what sounds to use. Also, from the voice, because she's thinking in registers, I have to be concerned with what kind of color and articulation I use. Then the whole process starts.

"We had a tour in the States in 1985," Pierre continues, "and the people were perplexed. They said, 'We don't know if you compose or improvise, because if you improvise, nobody can improvise so well, and if you compose, we don't understand how you do it.' We actually compose very classically. But then the process starts and sometimes there are some good accidents."

A remarkable example of their music is the 1988 ECM recording De La Nuit...Le Jour. Pierre employs a panoply of percussion instruments to produce images and emotions in the listener. "I like it," he says,

"because it's quite poetic. There are a lot of things that are not said, just engaged. You can hear things a certain way, but also in different dimensions. The concept was not as clear to me as my new recording, Solitudes, but I like the poetry in it. On the beginning of 'Wood Song' I'm using huge African beans. Each is about four feet. I was shaking these while moving around in the studio. I also had some water drums and put rings on my fingers to strike them with."

On songs like "Maroua," the metals and voices blend so well that it's often difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins. "We do that a lot because I have some cymbals that really sing," says Pierre. "When we play in public, sometimes the people look around because they don't know where the sounds come from."

The 1992 release, Solitudes, seems more subtle but reveals more depth on repeated listening. "Yes, we worked more at it," Pierre agrees, "and we tried the different parts much more. It was the first time on a record that I was not playing my basic kit. All the drums were special drums. I put my foot pedals on a board, screwed them to the wood so I could put them where I want, and hit what I wanted. I was playing these special 'low drums.' They look like Chinese drums. I can play them with sticks as well as with pedals. On 'Erba Luce,' I start with a solo on these drums played with vibraphone sticks. The whole record is percussion; I don't play set at all. Otherwise the center part of my set is





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Modern **DRUMMER**° always my old '60s Ludwigs. I was actually quite sad not playing them on the record, but in the music, the way we conceived it, I didn't find any place for them. So I tried to get away from the routine and play what had to be played for this music. It's possible on the next record I'll play set again."

Another aspect that shows up on this recording is Pierre's use of different sounds and timbres. "On the song 'Solitudes," he says, "you can hear the introduction on piano strings. I was looking for a long note, so I used the piano. I hit it with marimba sticks. I had different sticks in each hand because some strings would be too piano-like. Then I played marimba with two bass bows, and it sounds like an old organ. When I use a bow I look for the sound to sing like a violin. If you don't press too much with the bow, some real beautiful sounds can come out."

"Allegria" showcases Pierre on water drums. These are large calabashes, or gourds, cut in half. The bottom is filled with water and the slightly smaller top section then floats on the water, with the trapped air pocket creating a resonating chamber. These can be tuned by varying the amount of water. "The first idea came from the Danish saxophone player John Tchicai," he says. "We were in Hamburg, Germany, and he gave me two little plastic pots, wanting me to make a water drum. But it was miserable and had no sound. Then I was in Paris and a friend came over with a small calabash. I asked her where

she got it, and she said from a stall next door where they sell African food. I ran over there and saw these huge calabashes and asked if they'd sell them to me. In Africa they serve the food in them, and they wanted to know what I wanted them for. I said to make musical instruments. They took me to a garage and showed me these fantastic calabashes, saying, 'If it's for music, okay. But go away quickly because they all want to have them.' And that was that.

"I play them with all types of things, but the most beautiful sound is with the gong beaters. They get the 'lows' out. In Africa they use sticks and play only one at a time for dances. For me it's a real talking sound. When I look for instruments, I look for sounds that speak. Just to have an instrument collection is not very interesting. But to find sounds like the calabash, and certain cymbals I have, is a special type of thing. They speak to you, and the calabash is probably the greatest sound I've ever heard."

Sounds are obviously very important to Pierre. Though he uses many conventional percussion instruments, he usually plays them in unconventional ways. "When I practice," he says, "I like to let my mind float around, thinking of sounds and possibilities. Most of the time it's awful and gives nothing. But suddenly, when you don't think it could be, *bang*, you find a fantastic sound."

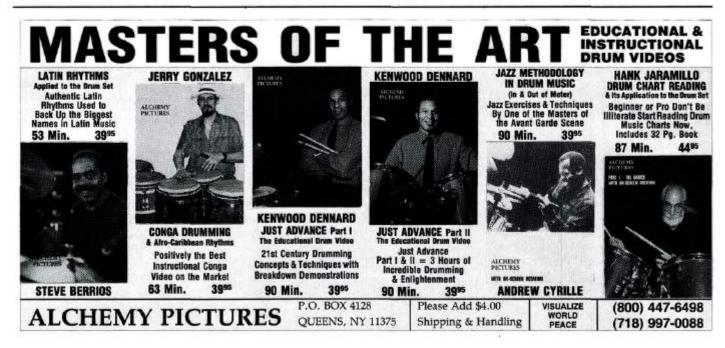
Often these sounds take on a very organ-

ic quality, sounding very much like animals, as in the tune "Talking Birds" from Favre's third solo recording, *Mountain Wind*. On this cut, he uses various short metallic sounds that are reminiscent of a flock of birds chirping. "I also used that sound on *Solitudes*," he explains. "These are the sound discs. They're like crotales, but without the bell. I put them on a tomtom—a big tom, if possible—because they sound into the tom. Then I play them with metal tubes that I found someplace. When you play live it's a very powerful sound."

Pierre has also assembled quite a collection of tuned instruments. "With the African bells, it's nearly impossible to get a definite range. So I have to go with an *illusion* of a melodic set. I looked for the ones that would go together in a range. There's a shop in Basel that has a lot of these bells. Sometimes they let me go down into the cellar to pick out what I like. But usually they all sound alike, so it's difficult to find the right ones."

Two and a half octaves of tuned Paiste gongs have more or less become Favre's "signature sound." The sound is haunting and exotic, somewhat between those of church bells and hand bells. "It happened almost by accident," he explains. "I was dreaming of this fantastic instrument, a new metal instrument, but nobody wanted to build it because it would cost too much money. That's why I still keep playing the gongs; it's the best I have.

"I don't want to go into the xylophone or



marimba because it's difficult to personalize them," Favre explains. "They have such a recognizable sound. That's how I also feel about gongs. I hate the oriental kind of gong playing. I play them more in a Western classical way, and that makes a contrast. The instrument I dreamed about would speak with much more depth. I use gongs a lot because they are the most melodic thing I have on my drums. I went to Paiste and they built a stand where I have just the bells of the gongs coming out, so they are very compact."

Also typical of Pierre's playing is his use of shakers and rattles. He uses them while playing his set, which often gives the illusion that there's more than one drummer playing. "I also cover my drums with discs of felt," he goes on. "That gives a fantastic sound. When playing the shakers, I can play either on the drums covered with felt, or just on the head. With African maracas I play directly on the head. I also play the African maracas on the water drums. That's incredible! There's a whole world there. You hear the maracas, the impact on the shell, and the bass as well. So it seems like many people playing."

In 1990 Pierre found himself working with renowned Estonian composer Arvo Part. Part is known for his many striking sacred choral works. On the ECM release Miserere, Pierre plays on the twenty-fiveminute-long "Sarah Was Ninety Years Old." The piece was originally written in 1977 for three solo voices, organ, and timpani, but was later revised with a different percussion part. With Pierre's free jazz background, Part's music seemed an unlikely vehicle for the drummer. "That was an idea of Manfred Eicher," he explains. "They had been doing that with two drummers before. Manfred proposed for the recording that I go to London with some tablas. But I thought the djembe sound would be better."

Part's composition is very stark, with the percussion playing solo. The written part is a rhythmic cycle of four drum beats and four rests played at a very slow tempo. The four drum beats consist of three low tones and one high, with the high moving one note earlier each time a new cycle is started. "We discussed three different tempos," says Pierre, "and I tried different sticks to get the two sounds. I also proposed to shorten the rests. It was always four beats

and four rests, but I proposed to shorten it to three rests because the wait was too long. It was a great atmosphere because Part is a great man—so much humor and so beautiful. I felt really quiet in the church where we recorded. The whole piece is fantastic, and I didn't think it needed one beat more."

With the very slow, dirge-like tempo, it seemed to be a real departure for Pierre. "No," he suggests. "It was more like an arrival. I practice a lot with two bass drums, playing very slow, looking for the song, looking for the movement. I try to avoid all the really fast technique exercises. Every morning when I'm home, I play very slow. Greater speed and the most technical things come by themselves. So when I played that piece I felt at home with the tempo and just a few beats. I thought, 'Oh, that's why I practiced.' Most drummers will practice fast. Practicing slow is hard because of the space between the notes. When you practice in the space very slowly, because it's long, you have to concentrate. It takes more courage to breathe the long parts of time—fast is more to the heartbeat.

"Part was quite excited the first time I played the piece. He came out of the booth and said, 'I don't know where you play to me. Do you play to my head, or to my chest, or...?' He was touching his crotch, [laughs] It was such a compliment as a drummer."

With all of the activities that he is involved in, Pierre still finds time to teach. "Here in Switzerland," he says, "it's something very special, because you have the classical conservatory and the jazz school with nothing in between. So they will now have a special State diploma if somebody studies with me. I have different students: One is more like a new-music player, one is a rock drummer, and one is a Latin player. But they must know a lot—the history of music, harmony—and they must play a mallet instrument. But they can earn a diploma out of their special way of playing. It's not classical, not jazz. It's quite a revolution. I think this is a great thing for



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# The Air Force Band Program

• by Staff Sgt. Richard Fitz

Drumming in an air force band could take your career up, up, and away!

The May 1991 issue of MD included a feature on the Armed Forces School of Music, in Norfolk, Virginia, and how it offered entry into the military band programs of the army, navy, and marine corps. As

was mentioned in that article, the airforce conducts their band program in a slightly different manner. The benefits of that program—both musical and occupational—are significant, and are worthy of consideration by anyone weighing the pros and cons of a career in music. Staff Sgt. Richard Fitz is the principal percussionist with the Air Combat Command (ACC) Heritage Of America Band. In this article, he outlines the nature of the air force band program and what it has to offer.

Over the past seventy-five years, the air force band program has grown from a very humble beginning to worldwide status. The fourteen members of the first known "air force" band set foot on French soil in September 1917, carrying instruments purchased with their lieutenant's personal funds. The commander of the 36th Aeronautics Squadron, to which they were assigned, was so impressed with his musicians that he petitioned the American Red Cross in Paris to help acquire more instruments, and increased the band's size.

Bands have come a long way since then. Throughout World War II, the bands of the Army Air Corps—including the famous band led by Glenn Miller—contributed significantly to the morale of our troops. Since then, bands have continued to inspire esprit de corps in our airmen, patriotism in our citizenry, and admiration and respect from people of all nations. Over half of all our enlisted band personnel (instrumentalists, vocalists, arrangers, and audio technicians) possess bachelor's degrees or higher. Over three quarters of our officers (leaders and conductors) hold master's degrees or higher. With a legacy rooted in our national her-

itage, they are attuned to the most current requirements and technology of the '90s. The air force band program is on the leading edge of professional music in America and around the world.

There are thirteen air force bands. The two premier bands are the U.S. Air Force band, in Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Air Force Academy Band, at the USAF Academy in Colorado. Nine regional bands are stationed at air force bases around the U.S. Additionally, one overseas band covers the Pacific and another covers Europe.

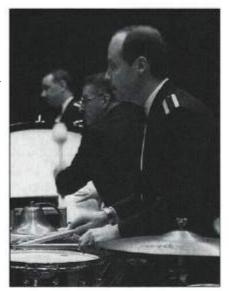
The ACC Heritage Of America Band, stationed at Langley Air Force Base in southeastern Virginia, is typical of the air force band

program. The sixty-piece band logs nearly 30,000 miles and entertains over one million people annually at over 450 performances throughout the Mid-Atlantic coastal region. Musicians drawn from the full concert band also form an eighteen-piece jazz ensemble and a six-piece pop combo—each of which tour separately in addition to the concert band's touring schedule.

The air force provides each member with state-of-the-art instruments, as well as other equipment. Funds are available for private study with a teacher of choice, and tuition assistance (75%) is available for college course work. Additional benefits include free medical and dental care for members and their dependents, thirty days annual paid vacation, a generous retirement system, veterans' benefits, low-cost life insurance, and base exchange and commissary privileges.

The air force is the only service that does not fill its bands from the Armed Forces School Of Music. Instead, a direct audition program is employed. Percussion audition requirements include prepared solos and sight reading on snare drum, timpani, mallet percussion, and drumset, and thorough knowledge and performance of all scales (chromatic, major, and all forms of minor). The audition committee consists of three to five people, including the Commander/Conductor of the band, the Assistant Commander/Conductor, and percussionists from the band. An individual may audition at any air force band, providing a vacancy exists.

After being accepted into the air force



Staff Sgt. Richard Fitz performs with the band's percussion section.



Recording is an important part of the band's activities. This is one of several recordings made under its former name of Tactical Air Command Band.



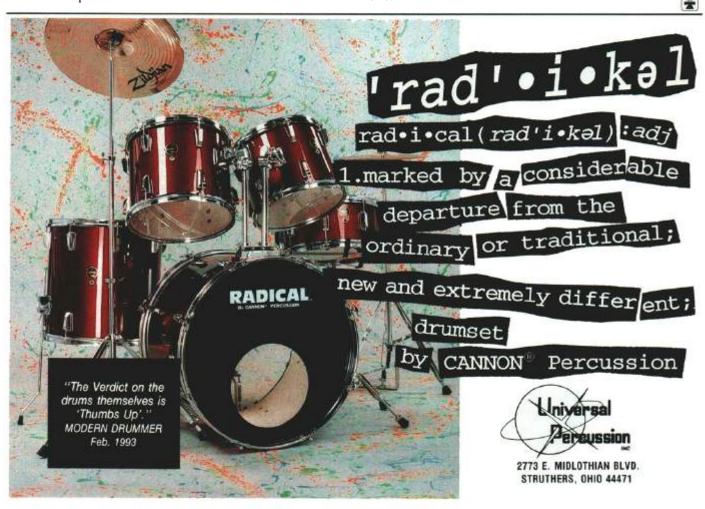
The ACC Heritage Of America Band, under the command of Lt. Col. Lowell E. Graham

band program, the first requirement is six weeks of basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas. After basic training, musicians are assigned directly to an air force band, where they begin stringent on-the-job training. This consists of private study with a qualified trainer in the band who already has the required skill level. The air force uses a Job Qualification Standard to standardize the musical requirements against which band members are evaluated. These requirements include musical abilities on all percussion instruments within all styles of music, sight-reading skills, maintenance and repair skills, and caliber of performance.

In terms of a percussionist's job in the band, a primary requirement is versatility. The band needs individuals with outstanding musical skills—and the ability to work with people. Primary duties include performing with the concert band, the jazz ensemble, popular combos, and the marching band. The repertoire for formal concerts, recording sessions, and military ceremonies includes standard literature, transcriptions, solo pieces, commissioned works, and popular arrangements. To dispel a popular misconception, military band performance is much more than "marching around the flagpole."

Every band member also helps to maintain the operational, administrative, or supply side of the job. Band members schedule tours and recording sessions, order instruments and equipment, arrange new music, manage the budget, and prepare all band publicity materials. Specific responsibilities are determined by an individual's rank and experience.

In terms of opportunities for playing, travel, and financial stability, a military band career is second to none. The repertoire is tremendously varied, the equipment is provided, the job security is guaranteed, and the pay is steady. These conditions simply cannot be matched in the commercial music business. Naturally, we like to think that the air force band program is a cut above even those of the other military services, as well. For more information, contact an air force recruiter or the commander of the air force band nearest your home.



# Luther Rix On Broadway With Tommy

• by William F. Miller

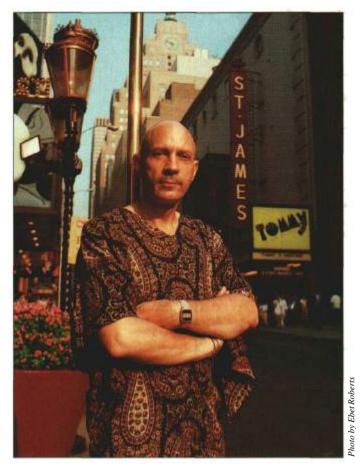
As the final note echoes through the St. James Theatre and the standing audience finally stops shouting their approval (after three curtain calls), an odd sight rises from the small opening above the orchestra pit—a barely perceptible cloud of heat or steam. This effect is not Broadway trickery, but rather the result of a powerful, two-hour plus performance by a band crammed in a space normally reserved for more polite music. The musicians trapped in that pit, although sweating and looking quite exhausted, are happy at their—and the show's—obvious triumph. It seems with Tommy—Pete Townshend's rock opera turned movie turned concert tour and now turned Broadway musical—the "Great White Way" has definitely welcomed rock in a big way.

At the center of the Tommy band—at the core of the show, in fact—is journeyman drummer Luther Rix. Rix has the difficult task of kicking the band and cast through some elaborate arrangements (and bringing the right "Moon-isms" to the music), without overstepping the mark and playing "too much" for show requirements. He handles it well, which is not surprising considering his experience: seventeen Broadway shows (as principal and/or sub for such productions as Grease, The Wiz, Barnum, and The Tap Dance Kid), touring and recording with Bob Dylan, Patti La Belle, Doc Severensen, Bette Midler, Henry Mancini, and many others, plus recording over a thousand jingles.

It's clear Rix enjoys being involved in a lot of different projects. This year, though, he's focused on Tommy. Besides his regular schedule with the show, the cast and band have performed on the Tonight Show and during the Tony Awards, and he recorded the cast album this past May (with famed producer George Martin at the helm). And with the tremendous commercial success of Tommy (the producers predict at least a five-year run), it would appear that Luther will be continuing to rock Broadway for quite some time.

**WFM:** You've had a lot of experience doing Broadway shows. How does *Tommy* compare to other shows you've performed?

LR: One thing that is different is that it's a hit. [laughs] It seems that a lot of the shows I would get called for would be ones that would go down the tubes, except for the ones I turned down! I turned down Richard Forman's *Three Penny Opera*, which was a guaranteed run at Lincoln Center. I also turned down *Annie*. At the time I wasn't interested in going to Washington for six weeks to start what was then a new show—and besides, I thought a show about a cartoon character who had no eyeballs was a dumb idea. Shows what I know!



But the difference between *Tommy* and the standard, old-fashioned Broadway show is obvious—it's like fire and ice. I enjoy going to a show like *Oklahoma*, but playing the drums for that show just isn't a thrill. Even some of the Broadway and off-Broadway shows I've played in the past that were supposedly rock-influenced were really very restrictive—shows like *Grease*, *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Salvation*, and *Little Shop Of Horrors*. First of all, they were all "Broadway rock," not really as aggressive as the real thing. The mental guideposts you have to have for those shows are, "play the part, don't be adventurous, don't try anything, don't get in the way, and follow the conductor." *Tommy* is the first show I've ever done where I feel I'm playing rock for the entire show—start to finish. We really go for it. We have a conductor, but he wants the band to groove. The whole attitude is completely different.

I was fortunate to get in at the very beginning, back when they were designing the show out at the La Jolla playhouse in California [where Tommy was put together and premiered). They

wanted me to be there at the beginning, within a couple of weeks after dance rehearsals were commencing. This was in May of '91, well over a month before we were going to start previews. In fact, there were no charts for me to read. I wrote all the drum parts for the show, which was one of the most satisfying parts of the project. I would be told what was going to be rehearsed over the next couple of days, and I would transcribe Keith Moon's playing off of the Tommy album, making alterations to sort of bring the parts into the '90s. I had to alter his parts slightly in order to accommodate the dancers, but I tried to capture his spirit. There were quite a few alterations from the origi-



Luther in the pit with his Tommy-era kit

nal record. So I'd find out all that stuff and go home and rewrite all my charts. I used my original pencil charts for the entire run.

WFM: Since you essentially wrote the drum book, do you have the show memorized at this point?

LR: Actually, no. Even though I have a lot of musical freedom with Tommy, there is so much detail that I don't think I'll ever have it all memorized. I have a lot of room to improvise, and I think that's also what keeps me from being able to totally memorize the show. The music essentially never stops, so there's a lot of music to play. Plus, there must be a couple hundred dance accents that I'm expected to nail. If I miss one, I hear about it.

WFM: How long did you have to develop the show before it came to Broadway?

LR: We wound up performing the show in California for about three and a half months-which was a month and a half longer than expected—because the show was making so much money. In fact, they moved another show that was scheduled to be at the theater because they wanted us to stay. Tommy was the most expensive show ever put on at La Jolla, and yet it was the most profitable they'd ever done.

WFM: Did you work with Townshend in the development of the music in those early stages?

LR: He was in London during the early rehearsals, but we were doing very elaborate, on-the-spot tapings of what we were coming up with. The tapes would be sent to him, he would immediately send back his recommendations, and we'd go from there. He showed up a few weeks before the initial production and spent some time with the band. I guess he was happy with what I was playing, because he didn't have any complaints. He did work with the guitarists pretty closely; he even gave them a few of his personal guitars so they could get "his" sound.

I was surprised at how "open" he was with our suggestions, considering they were his tunes. He didn't have a rigid concept of how the songs should sound. And he was certainly very complementary of the band. He said on several occasions how happy he was with what we were playing, which was very gratifying. He was a real pleasure to work with.

**WFM:** How did you get this gig?

LR: The conductor hired for *Tommy*, Joe Church, is a Broadway conductor who I've worked with before. I did Little Shop Of Horrors for Joe. I was also recommended to him by the contractor, John Miller. Joe decided on me, and hired most of the band from New York, even though at the time the show was being put together in California.

WFM: Was your decision to go with the show in any way based on a love for the music? Age-wise I would imagine you're more of a contemporary of the Who than someone who was influenced by

LR: That's true. But I was playing in psychedelic rock bands when they were a big hit. I was certainly familiar with their music. WFM: So you weren't star-struck jamming with Pete Townshend?

LR: Well, it's definitely cool to be able to say I know Pete, no question about it. And of all the music Pete and the Who did, I enjoyed *Tommy* the best. I thought the music was pretty startling for rock, with all of the suspended chords and odd phrases. I think a lot of rockers at the time were puzzled by it, but I enjoyed it.

Getting back to your question about why I wanted to do this show and possibly why I got the call, I think a lot had to do with the fact that, yes, I do have show experience, but more importantly, at heart I'm a mad-man rock 'n' roller. That's a big part of the show.

I have to be very careful with who I get to sub for me on this show. Obviously it has to be someone who's educated and has show experience. Even more importantly, the show demands a drummer who can bring some fire to each performance.

WFM: There are eight performances of Tommy per week. Will it get to a point where you're going to have difficulty bringing that fire to what is a demanding gig?

LR: The physical aspects of it are not a problem. The more you do it, the better you get at it. Of course, when we first started running it all the way through in California, it was taxing. Then when the show moved to New York, the second half of the show was changed to make it more intense. The stage action, the special effects, and the music all increased dramatically from what we were doing in La Jolla. So it took me a little while to build up those chops. It's an aerobic workout, no question about it.

But the real strain with Tommy is having to be creative show after show. Playing the same tunes in the same order and having sections that are very specific can give you the drumming equivalent of writer's block. There are times when I get to those sections where I'm supposed to cut loose, and it becomes a challenge. I think it's imperative that the drummer inspire the whole band. That's what will make the music more exciting for everybody.

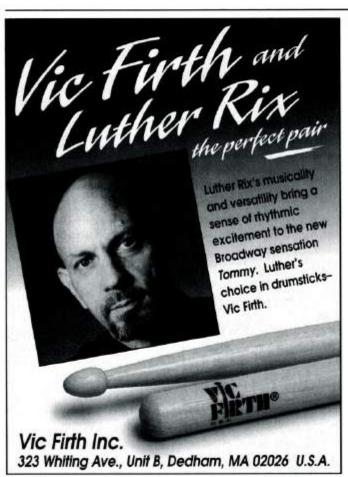
WFM: You mentioned earlier about Townshend giving his guitars to the guitarists. I understand there's something interesting about the drumkit you're using.

LR: Well, I'm using a kit that I bought the same year that the original Tommy came out. It's a Slingerland kit with all concert toms. In fact, even the bass drum has only a batter head—the drum didn't even come with mounts for a front head. The kit really sounds like it's from that era. Best of all, the finish is what Slingerland called Tangerine Satin Flame. Also, the inside of the bass drum is finished with chrome-colored rippled vinyl. It is a psychedelic drumset! The snare drum is also older-a Ludwig 6 1/2xl4 chrome drum that everybody used to use. It's fun to be playing these drums again.

I originally had two bass drums and six toms on the kit, but for the show I'm using a double pedal instead of the second kick. I use that pedal quite a bit in the show, playing that driving 8th-note pulse that Keith was famous for. And since I don't have the room, I had to scale down to only five toms.

WFM: Would that still be considered a lot of drums for Broadway?

LR: I'd say so. In fact, I'm sure that if I used a modern kit with contemporary hardware, I'd never fit the whole thing in the space provided. I'm using the skinny stands we all used back then, which are more than sufficient to hold anything I throw at them.





Sometimes I'm playing at an unbelievable volume down there, and nothing falls over.

That kit was my number-one kit for years. I used it on the road with a few different acts, including Bette Midler, Ten Wheel Drive, and Mary Travers. And producers used to request those toms at jingle sessions when they wanted that California tom-tom sound.

**WFM:** The cast album of *Tommy* was released a couple of months back. What was it like recording it, and what was it like working with a legendary producer like George Martin?

**LR:** Compared to most cast albums, we took a long time recording *Tommy*. We did it in two and a half days.

**WFM:** That sounds like an amazingly short period of time.

LR: It does seem quick, but that's how they're done. We took about half an hour to get drum sounds, they got everything set for the other instruments, and then fifty of us started tracking in one room. The most difficult part of it was hearing what was going on. The headphone mix was barely adequate. You have to compromise all over the place. But the big concern was trying to get a big rock sound rather than the typical cast album sound.

As for working with George Martin, he was a very nice man, but under those circumstances you don't get to know each other too well. He was very focused on the arrangements, shortening songs that were designed for extended dance routines. I think he was the perfect choice because he has the orchestral background, plus he understands rock from all of his work with the Beatles.

WFM: It seems that the press has been very positive about the

show. But one criticism I did see was that the sound quality in the house was too good—I believe the reviewer's comment was something like "not enough like a conceit." It seems he meant that the show sounded too much like a recording.

**LR:** That review was in *Rolling Stone*. I have to say that the attitude of the producers and Pete Townshend was that they wanted the sound quality to be the best it could be. So every step along the way was carefully scrutinized.

I have a feeling that if that particular reviewer could see the band perform, if the band was actually visible to the audience, his opinion of the sound being too good—whatever that means—would go by the boards. If they saw us up there playing and sweating they'd say, "Boy, doesn't that sound amazing for a live concert?" as opposed to, "Gee, it sounds too much like a recording."

My son had the perfect solution: He suggested that they install a hydraulic lift under the pit, and during the finale the band would be elevated onto the stage. I think people would just go berserk to be able to see that. But the audience goes berserk at the end of the show already!

**WFM:** I could not believe the fervor the audience displayed at the end of the show—people were raving, some were in *tears*.

**LR:** It's hard for me to believe the response we get. And in a way it seems strange, because the story of *Tommy* is a little dark and even a bit obscure. But at the end of every show the response is like...it's like a miracle!

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## Industry Happenings

# Music Workshop Productions Seminar

The pilot seminar for a series of such events-scheduled to tour the country under the auspices of Music Workshop Productions—was held recently in Anaheim, California. The weekend-long event combined instrumental instruction sessions, hands-on performance experience, a music business class, and clinic/concert performances by instructors and guest artists. The seminar wrapped up with a discussion summarizing how the students should get started applying all the information received about playing music and the inherent pitfalls associated with the music industry. Ongoing career counseling has also been made available to students as part of MWP's after-care program.

Special thanks were offered by MWP directors Dean Brown and Jim Speights to Gregg Bissonette. Said Dean, "Gregg is the consummate professional, and he was the very first guest instructor considered when MWP was being formulated. His teaching and communication skills are second to none, and the warmth and sincerity that was



felt by each student was evident in their appreciation of his efforts."

MWP's official tour is scheduled to reach selected cities throughout the U.S. this fall. For further information, contact Musicians Workshop Productions, P.O. Box 5823, Whittier, CA 90607-5823, (310) 693-0108.

Miami Percussion Institute Opens

The Miami Percussion Institute, a new dedicated percussion school located in Hallandale, Florida, recently celebrated its grand opening. Artists performing in support of the celebration included Sonny Emory, Nicko McBrain, and Marvin "Smitty" Smith, along with MPI curriculum designer Russ Miller. The school contains a 250-seat performance center, a multi-purpose teaching lab, several drumset teaching and practice labs, Latin percussion rooms, and an audio-visual area. A combination of top local and national-level educators will serve as faculty. Courses range from private lessons, to summer sessions, to full-year certificate programs. Scholarships are available. For further information, contact MPI, 2920 S.W. 30th Ave., Hallandale, FL 33009, (305) 457-0164.

## **Endorser News**

**Deen Castronovo** (Paul Rogers, Hardline), **Tal Bergman** (Billy Idol), **Sean Kinney** (Alice In Chains), and **Mike Hansen** (L.A. studio) are new Vater drumstick endorsers.

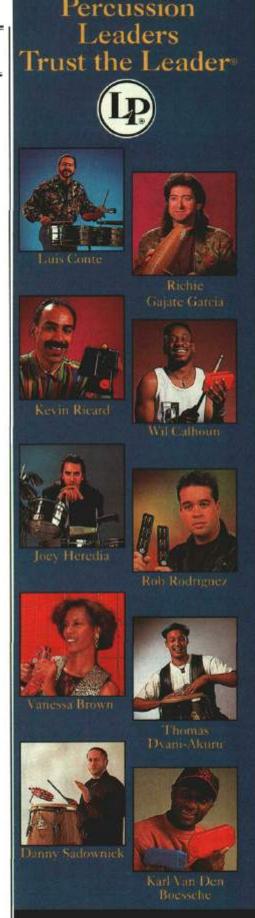
Thelonius Monk, Jr., Billy Drummond, and Bobby Previte are all playing Slingerland *Artist Custom Series* drumkits.

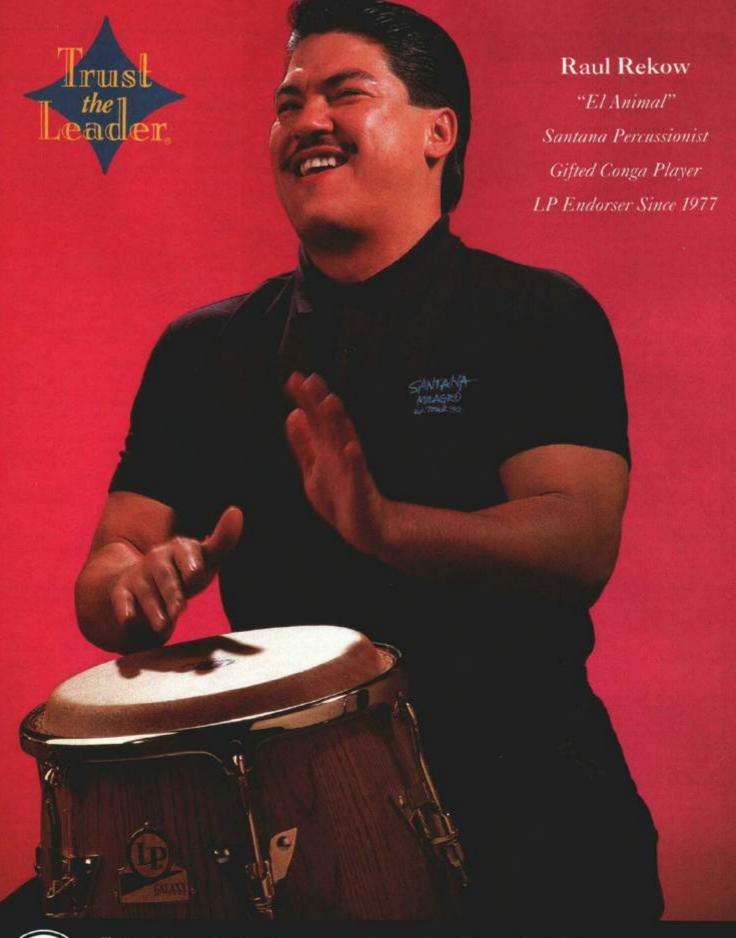
New Stingray Percussion drumset artists include **Jerome Snelling** (Babyface), Sy **Seyler** (Shock LaRue), **Kerri Collings** (Craig Erickson), **Robby Cox** (Swinging Medallions), **Dick Cully** (Dick Cully Big Band), and **Jeff Wise** (Thrust).

Spyro Gyra's **Joel Rosenblatt** is a new Frederico Percussion endorser.

Drummers now playing DW drums, pedals, and hardware include Tim Smith (Poco), Johnny Dee (Britny Fox), Curt Bisquera (Mick Jagger), Dee Plakas (L7), Herman Rarebell (Scorpions), Jerry Augustiniak (10,000 Maniacs), Louie Weaver (Petra), Sean Kinney, and Ian Palmer. Nicko McBrain (Iron Maiden), Chris Worley (Jackyl), and Vinnie Paul (Pantera) are endorsing DW pedals.

**Michael Blakey** (Tidal Force) and **Mike Hansen** are now UFIP cymbal endorsers.







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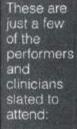




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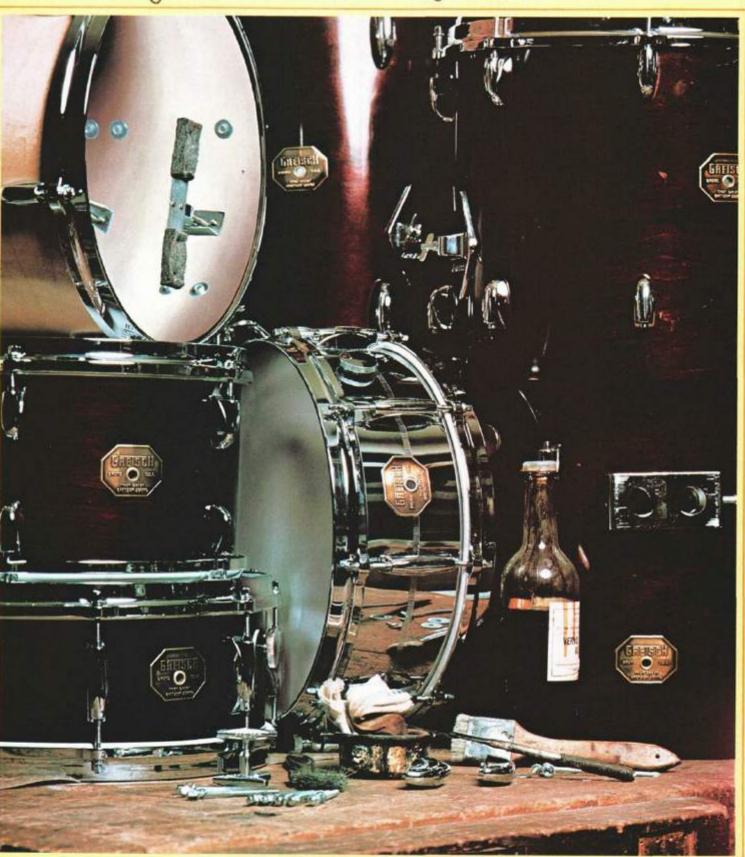
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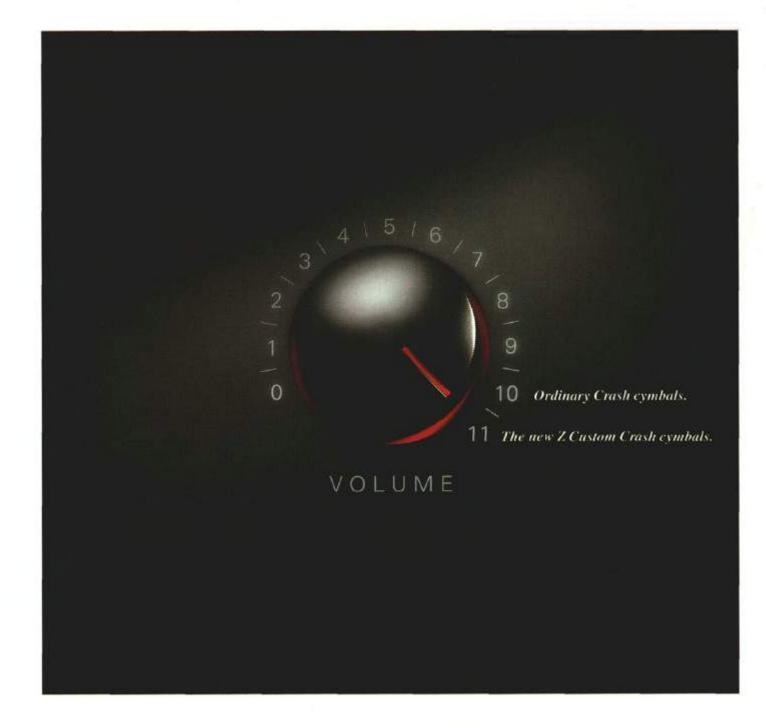
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